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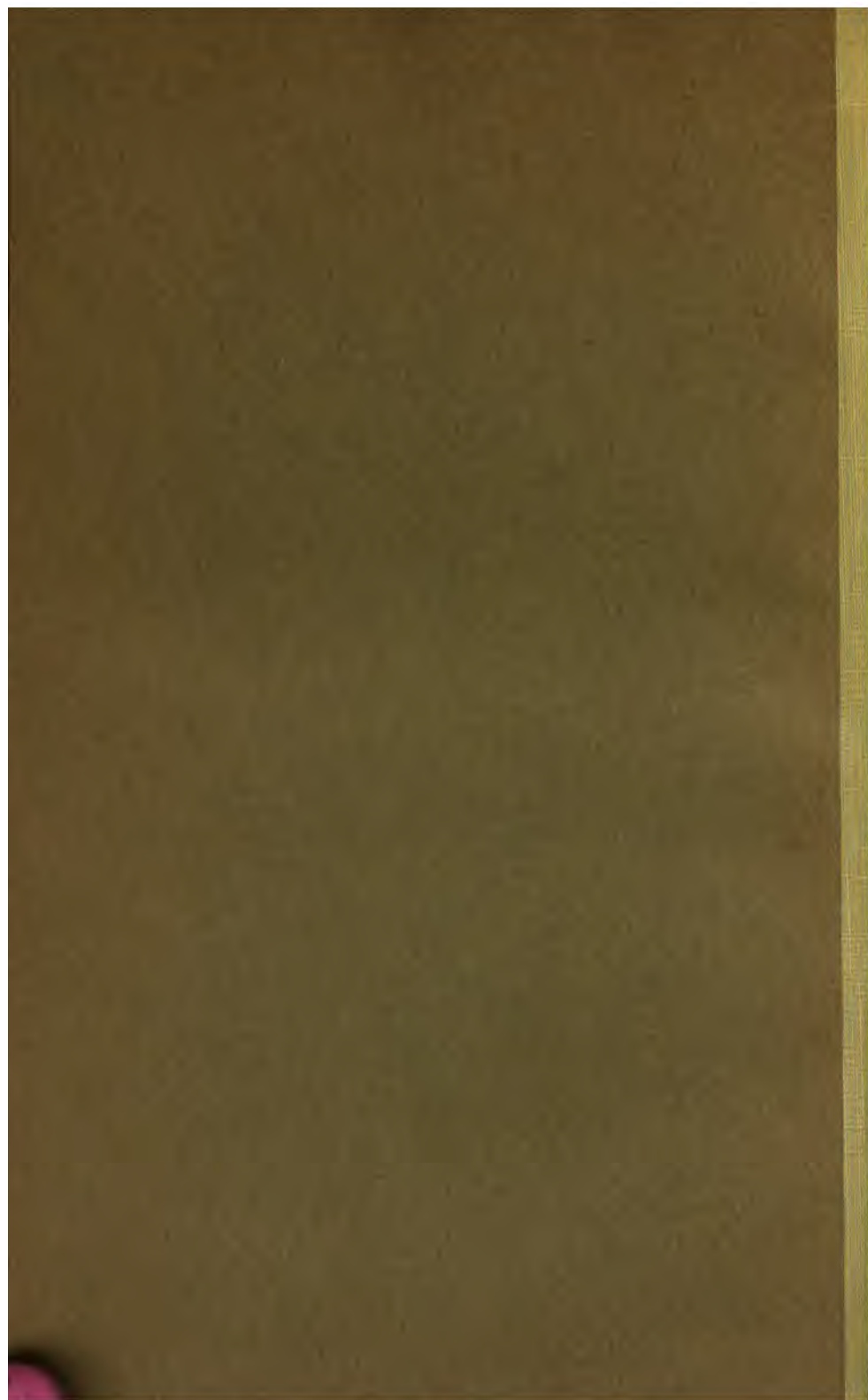
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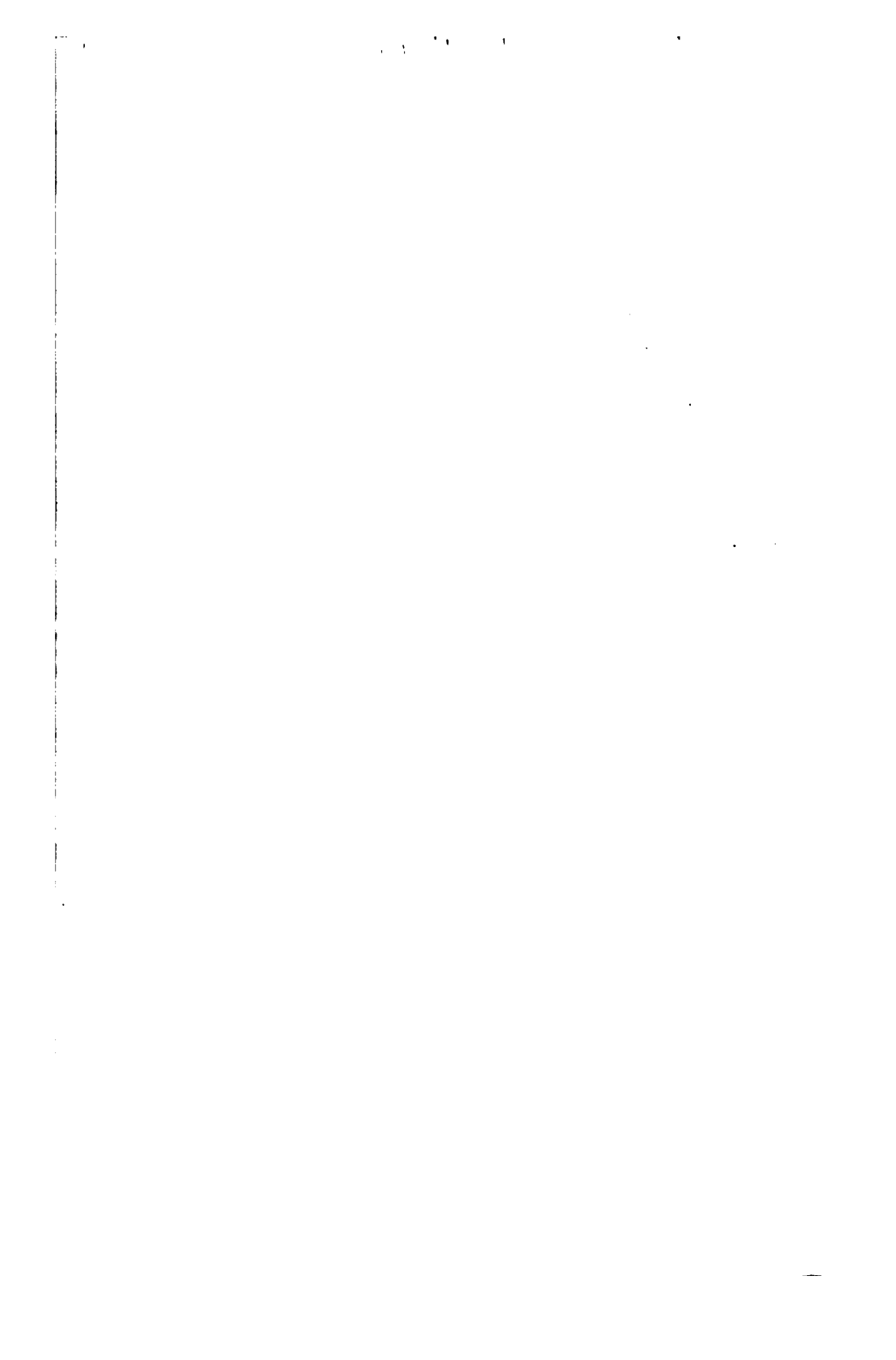
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SPORT IN MANY LANDS.

SPORT IN MANY LANDS.

BY

H. A. L. *Lieut. General Anthony Lewis*

"THE OLD SHEKARRY."

AUTHOR OF "THE HUNTING GROUNDS OF THE OLD WORLD," "THE FOREST AND THE FIELD,"
ETC., ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

WITH 164 ILLUSTRATIONS.

"I cannot rest from travel, I will drink life to the lees."

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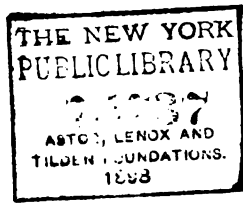
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SPORT IN MANY LANDS.

CHAPTER I.

SHOOTING IN ASIA MINOR.

IN the year 1864, the Circassian tribes, who for fifty years had held their own in the Caucasus against the gigantic power of Russia, were obliged to yield; and vast swarms of fugitives from the steppes of the Kuban, and the slopes of the Elburz, abandoning their "konacs" in the mountains, emigrated *en masse* to Turkey, with whatever goods and gear they could carry with them. I had been staying a few days with an old Danubian friend, Hassan Pacha, at his "chiflik," or country residence, near Arnautkoi, on the Bosphorus, when, early one morning, an aide-de-camp came in with the news that a large Turkish man-of-war, full of refugees from the Caucasus, had arrived from Souchum Kaleh, and was anchored close at hand, within a stone's throw of the house. "*Allah talah,*" exclaimed our host with a knowing twinkle of his eye, "now or never is the time to furnish our zananahs handsomely, without having dirt thrown on our beards, and being fleeced by those extortionate *pesivenkler*. So, sound the 'boot and saddle,' and, Insh'allah, we shall be the first in the field, before those rascally Stamboul merchants get wind of the arrival." "Ready, aye, ready," was the order of the day, and with a *posse* of chaushes and retainers, we descended to the jetty where the

Pacha's *caïques* were waiting, and in a few moments we were standing on the deck of the Osmanli man-of-war, where, after the usual exchange of salams, pipes and coffee were produced, and the object of our visit explained.

The scene on board was certainly not inviting, and needed a somewhat strong stomach to examine in detail, as the voyage had been a long one, rough weather having been experienced in the Black Sea; and a crowd of men, women, and children were lying huddled up together in groups, pale, emaciated, and apparently half stupified by the privations and hardships they had undergone on the voyage. The unexpected appearance of the Pacha and his somewhat gorgeously arrayed suite produced a considerable sensation. The officers of the ship vied in their polite attentions to us, pointing out the most desirable-looking of both sexes amongst the various groups; whilst the fathers and husbands were in no way loath to exchange their "rising stock" for Turkish piasters, and a brisk trade was soon opened, wives, sisters, sons, and daughters being offered for sale indiscriminately. Being the first and only customers, there was no competition; consequently the Pacha and his suite had no difficulty in purchasing a few additions to their harem on their own terms, as well as a sufficient number of girls and boys as domestic servants for their household. The supply exceeding the demand by long chalks, the purchasers obtained bargains not to be met with every day; and the Pacha's "*kiatib*," or secretary, having written out the necessary papers, the documents were signed, and the piasters paid down on the deck. Although slavery as a rule is not to be defended, it must be admitted that in this instance the arrangements made were equally advantageous to the buyer, the seller and the sold. The Turkish Pacha and several of his suite got a couple or so of pretty wives on the cheap, and several useful helpmates for their establishments; the emigrant, freed from

encumbrances, whose mouths he would have had to fill, obtained a little stock of the needful to set himself up upon landing; and the girls and boys bought, instead of being kept half starved, would at once find comfortable homes and kind treatment.

Not being disposed either to invest in a wife or set up as a householder in Turkey, I was merely a spectator—although I was importuned on all sides to buy—when my attention was attracted to two handsome, athletic young fellows who stood aloof, and appeared to be of a higher caste than the rest. Finding that they spoke Turkish, I entered into conversation with them, and ascertained that they, having compromised themselves too much to hope for lenient terms from the Russians, had abandoned their home for a time, and were thinking of joining the Turkish army. Being very much prepossessed by their manly bearing and general appearance, I offered to take them both into my service, and then and there arranged that they should accompany me in a shooting expedition I intended to make in the Kula Mountains, between Batoun and Ardahan. Never had I better reason to congratulate myself upon my skill as a physiognomist, for two more willing, faithful, and devoted followers a man never had. My arrangements were made in far less time than those of the Pacha and his staff; and whilst I was waiting for the completion of their settlement, I was persuaded by a withered, shrivelled up old crone to buy her grandson, a healthy, merry-looking, bright-eyed boy about thirteen years old, who forthwith became a part of my goods and chattels in exchange for ten five-franc pieces, and to whom in the course of a few days was entrusted the special charge of some half-dozen chibouks, a narghillai or hookah, a couple of bull-terriers, and a grand old retriever, my constant companions.

When all arrangements were concluded, a ship's boat was lowered, and the new acquisitions were passed into it, strange

to say, without any sign of emotion or show of feeling being perceptible either on one side or the other. I tried to get a glimpse of "the bargains" obtained by my host, but they were now too closely veiled for any recognition of their features. I noticed, however, that they were all of the fat kind ; so that condition had evidently been taken into consideration in their selection.

The Pacha, although considerably elated at his success, did not appear, I thought, quite at his ease. Perhaps he anticipated "a shine" in his establishment amongst the old stock, who might not be over-pleased at the augmentation of his household ; perhaps he felt that he was somewhat over-married, and was cogitating upon his increased responsibilities ; or perchance he was considering as to which of his new acquisitions he should first "throw the handkerchief." He appeared deep in thought, and as I knew he would have his hands full for a few days, I intimated my intention of returning for a time to Mysierees' hotel, my old head-quarters at Pera, with my charge, to which arrangement he tacitly consented. Upon landing at the jetty, I perceived the dilapidated condition of my new followers' externals ; so having taken leave of the Pacha, and bidding one of his chaushes to accompany me, I engaged a passing *caïque* and landed at the Stamboul side of the Galata bridge ; then making my way to the bazaar, I got each of them a complete and serviceable rig-out, and sending them under charge of the chaush to the baths, they were enabled to make a very decent appearance at the hotel. There I was joined a couple of days afterwards by Captain Vaughan and Mr. Steuart, who were both going to take part in the Georgian expedition ; and having obtained a passage in a government despatch boat, we landed at Batoun with all our belongings and people, who formed a little host in themselves.

The Seraskier had very kindly given me letters to the Pachas

in authority in Batoun and Ardahan, so that we soon found comfortable quarters, and had no difficulty in hiring sufficient baggage animals to transport our gear. We also each of us bought a couple of sturdy, cob-like, little mountain horses at prices varying from £12 to £15 each for our own riding, and having obtained two trusty guides and one of the Pacha's official messengers for procuring supplies, we made a start inland.

During the war of 1855, after the surrender of General Williams, whilst making my way from the neighbourhood of Erivan, *via* Ardahan to Batoun, I had made the acquaintance of several of the Georgian chiefs of the Kula range, and learned from them that bears, red deer, and other game abounded in the ravines on the southern slopes of the range. It was to renew this acquaintance, and more especially to hunt over this district, that I again found my way into Asia Minor.

Three short marches brought our party to the foot of the Kula range, and skirting the base until we found a pass, two more, along somewhat difficult mountain tracks, brought us to the hamlet of Beuk-kara-su, situated in a broad, shallow, well wooded valley in the very heart of the range. This was the residence of my good friend, the Aga Ghoolam Ali, who received us with great cordiality; so I determined to make his village my head-quarters for a time. At my especial request he assigned for our use a couple of decent-looking huts in a small enclosed garden on the outskirts of the village, which we preferred to an establishment of much greater pretensions near his own house, as being more private.

Knowing from experience the necessity of a careful purification of the establishment if we intended to sleep in comfort, we remained under canvas a couple of days, whilst the huts underwent a thorough cleansing. The walls being of sunburnt brick, and the floor of mud, I had the old roof pulled off, and lighted

brushwood fires inside and out, so as to kill all undesirable occupants; and after the place had been thoroughly cleaned out and thatched with fresh grass, it made extremely comfortable quarters. The second hut, having undergone a similar purification, was assigned to our followers; a cooking-house and commodious sheds for our horses were constructed; so that the whole party and its belongings were housed comfortably in case of bad weather. The villagers cut the grass for thatching as well as for our horses's food, taking these out with their own herds to graze when not wanted, while the Aga sent round to all the adjacent villages to inquire of the herdsmen as to the haunts of any bears they might know of. From every side we received credible accounts of game, and our prospects were most encouraging.

The first three days after our arrival we were too much engaged in establishing ourselves to go after large game, but Steuart killed a brace of bustards within sight of the village; and enough grey partridge, with an occasional pheasant or hare for the pot, were to be picked up at any time in some low bush that skirted a few scattered patches of cultivation. The fourth day we invited the Aga and several of the headmen of the adjacent villages to a grand feast, buying a fat bullock and some sheep for the occasion; and after justice had been done to the good cheer, it was arranged that on the next day the villagers should be collected and beat up a ravine some three miles distant, into which a couple of bears had been tracked, and which was known to be full of game.

Starting at daybreak, the Aga, and two of his people as guides, conducted us to the foot of a rather steep hill, where we found some forty villagers assembled, armed with all kinds of antiquated fire-arms; and we were informed that an equal number were collected about a mile further on. A densely wooded ravine cleft the side of the mountain, and we were to

make our way as stealthily as possible up the slope of the hill, and take post on each side of the head of the ravine, whilst the villagers, closing in from both sides, beat towards us. The plan seemed to promise well, and there was scarcely a breath of air stirring to betray our presence ; so we commenced operations



PARTRIDGES.

by clambering up the dry rocky bed of a torrent that had worn a way in the side of the mountain.

We were none of us in very good condition after Embassy feeds and the dissipations of Pera ; so we had to stop from time to time to rest, for the steep ascent much resembled the side of the grand pyramid near Cairo, except that some of the

steps were very much higher, and that the hill was some six times the height of old Cheops' tomb. On the way we saw several slots of red deer, and twice we heard game breaking through the underwood in the ravine below us. At last we gained the crest of the hill, and moving cautiously along the ridge so as not to appear conspicuous against the sky-line, we got to the head of the ravine, where we found gullies branching off in two directions.

On examination of the ground, we noticed the sign of bears, two days old, and quite fresh "pugs" of a pack of wolves, who must have passed into the ravine that morning. There were also several fresh slots of deer, leading in and out of the ravine; and from the size of the sign there must have been one or two good harts among the herd. Having made sure that there was no other easy outlet or run leading out of the head of the ravine, it was decided that Vaughan and Steuart should watch one passage, whilst I guarded the other. We had each a double breech-loading rifle and a revolver, and in addition to my 10-bore Westley-Richards, I had a double 4-bore duck gun, loaded with B.B. shot, which was carried by Cassim, one of the Circassians, whilst his brother Ali shouldered an American axe, and took charge of the water chagul. I had hardly got to my station and cut away a few branches that impeded a clear view of the gap up which I expected the game to come when I heard three distant shots—the signal for the beaters to advance—from the bottom of the hill, and shortly afterwards I saw the two parties of villagers extending themselves in a line at the base of the ravine.

The movement appeared to me to be admirably executed, as, notwithstanding their distance, from my bird's eye view I could every now and then get a glimpse of the line of men making their way through the gaps in the trees.

My companions, the two Circassians, were in the most

exuberant spirits, evidently longing for the fray; and it did one's heart good to mark their eyes sparkling with excitement, whilst they were too discreet to utter even a whisper, or to show a superfluous inch of their bodies over the crest as they peered into the bush below. The mountaineers had evidently been brought up in a good school, and constant skirmishing against Russia's best light troops had not only proved their mettle, but had taught them discretion, and made them men before the down had covered their cheeks.

When the line of beaters had been completely formed across the mouth of the ravine, gun shots were fired from time to time on either side, and presently shouting was heard all along the line, which betokened game afoot. At this moment four shots fired in rapid succession, closely followed by three more, were heard from the direction of the top of the ravine where Steuart and Vaughan were posted, and immediately afterwards eight hinds, followed by an old hart, came cantering up the pass, making the stones clatter as they scrambled up the steepest parts. Notwithstanding the chance of bears being afoot, the royal head was a temptation not to be resisted, and as his broad chest was fully exposed, and offered an easy shot, I dropped him in his tracks with the first barrel, and rolled over a young hind that passed within a dozen yards of me with the second.

Drawing my hunting knife, I presented it to Cassim, telling him to perform the usual Mussulman rite so as to make it lawful food, and I had hardly finished reloading when Ali directed my attention to an enormous brown bear who was slowly winding his way up the hill in our direction. Every now and again he would rise, sit upright on his haunches, and make a peculiar moaning noise; which strange proceeding for some time I could not understand, until at last I saw a second bear struggling up the hill evidently badly wounded. Her

mate was piloting the way, but she could only crawl along very slowly. When the male got within about eighty yards from the crest of the hill, he again halted, and, turning towards his wounded friend, again stood upon his haunches, as if surveying the approaching beaters. Whilst in this position with his nose upturned, he presented a most favourable opportunity, and I dropped him stone dead with a bullet in the centre of the back of the neck, which broke the spine just where the head is set on the body. The shot alarmed the wounded female, and she again broke back and disappeared in the bush below.

Again a file firing was heard in Vaughan's direction, and at the same moment four great wolves came creeping along under the steep crest of the hill, within thirty yards of our position ; taking the smooth bore from Cassim, I fired a double raking shot, killing one outright and wounding two others, so that they could hardly drag themselves along, and I was on the point of bidding Cassim to despatch them with the axe, when a herd of at least a dozen deer dashed up the hill and passed us at full speed, within twenty yards of our ambuscade. As I did not see a stag amongst them, I let them go without pulling trigger. My forbearance was amply rewarded, for a grand old hart with magnificent antlers came trotting up almost immediately, and I gave him a right and left pretty close behind the shoulder-blade as he mounted the crest, when, leaping into the air convulsively, he fell dead, one of the bullets having penetrated the heart. Soon after this I heard loud cries from some of the beaters, some of whom had now nearly gained the top of the hill ; the thought of the wounded bear flashed across my mind, and, hastily reloading, I made my way towards the spot from whence the cries proceeded.

It was as I dreaded ; three of the villagers had come across the wounded bear lying down under a rock, and one of them,



DEER DRIVING IN ASIA MINOR.

after firing at her, finding that she did not move or show any sign of life, approached pretty close, when she charged and grappled with him. Luckily she was very far gone and weak from loss of blood, so she could not inflict much injury; but with an extraordinary tenacity of life she maintained her hold, notwithstanding she was repeatedly stabbed with long knives, until Cassim split open the back of her head with his axe, when she relaxed her grip and fell backwards, dead. The man was rather severely clawed on the back of his left hand, and one of his ears was split open; but a couple of stitches and some diachylon plaster, with a handful of piasters, made matters all right, and squared the transaction satisfactorily.

We now made our way back up the ravine towards the place where Vaughan and Steuart were posted, and found that they also had had grand sport, having killed two wild hogs, a fine hart and two hinds, a couple of roe-deer, three wolves, a dog lynx, and a curiously spotted gannet; whilst they had wounded the female bear, and two other deer, one of which was afterwards found. Our united bag was, therefore, a very fair display of game, and, notwithstanding the quantity that was killed and driven over the hill, the beaters said that another bear, several sounders of hog, and a herd of deer, broke back through their line and got away. It took some time to collect and divide the game, so that all engaged in the hunt had a fair share; and our party did not get back until sunset, when we found a good dinner awaiting us, to which ample justice was done, after the day's work. Later on in the evening, we all adjourned to the chief's house, where a special entertainment was provided; and native songs, dances, and a burlesque play, in which several women took part, kept us up until the small hours.

The valley of Beuk-kara-su, or the "Big Black Water," takes

its name from a beautiful pellucid stream which winds through the valley, and which in the spring, after the melting of the snow on the lateral heights, becomes a furious torrent, sweeping away trees, rocks, and every other obstruction in its course, and sometimes bursting its banks and inundating the plain. At the extremity of this valley is a high mountain, or rather a clump of high mountains, the sides of which, from a distance, appear rocky and bare, except in the numerous ravines and clefts in the face of the rock, which are clothed with dense waving forest extending from the base far up the slopes, and almost to the crest or plateau.

The summit or highest peak, which is a mass of black porphyritic rock, resembles a gigantic chest from the valley below; and the Georgians call it "Sas-ka-sundook," or the "Mother-in-law's Chest," having a tradition that some powerful *afrit*, or spirit of the mountain, buried his mother-in-law alive on the top of the hill and piled the great porphyritic mass on the spot to secure her. The Aga and his people told us that this mountain was a grand resort for all kinds of game, but that, as it bore an evil reputation, and was also known to be inhabited by *gins* and *ghouls*, none of the inhabitants of the valley had dared to intrude on their domain. "What, Aga Effendi," said I, "do you, who have killed over a score of Russians in your time, mean to tell me that you are afraid of meeting spirits? Why, man, I wish we had only the luck to come across one. Piasters would never be scarce again in our *konacs*."—"That may be true, my friend," replied the Aga; "up to this time the dead have never interfered with me, nor I with them, but I and my people have been told strange things about that hill; and I have myself remarked that, whenever there is a storm, the lightning always seems to play round that black looking peak, leaving the rest of the valley in darkness. There must be some reason for that, although I cannot

understand it; however, Bey Effendi, if you intend to go to the Mother-in-law's Prison, and cast dirt on the beards of the spirits, I and my people will go with you. We have faced Azriel, and gone through some rough work together in old days; and, Mashallah! now the Moskofler are quiet, a brush, even with a ghou, would be a pleasant change after my late quiet life."

There was not a single atom of fear in the whole composition of our gallant host, and although it was evident that he would rather have had to cut his way through a *sortie* of Cossacks than face an imaginary danger, he had no intention of going from his word, and gave orders that about two score of the stoutest of his people should be ready to start at dawn the next day. In the meantime we reconnoitred the approaches, and endeavoured to ascertain, with the aid of our telescopes, which ridge seemed to offer the most feasible route to the summit. We estimated the altitude to be some four or five thousand feet above the plateau on which we were located; but, although the sides appeared terribly rugged, as there was no snow to encounter, we felt confident in our powers of making the ascent and descent in the day. Whilst we were cogitating upon the best means of accomplishing our enterprise, the chief of a neighbouring village, who was visiting our host, informed us that there was a mad dervish living in an old ruined shrine at the foot of the mountain, who was said to hold communications with the spirits of the mountain from time to time; and that perhaps he would serve us as a guide. It was therefore settled that we should assemble the people at the foot of the mountain on the first day and commence the ascent on the second. In the meantime we made every necessary preparation for a six days' expedition. I purchased a dozen oxen, a flock of goats, and a few sheep, whilst the Aga sent a couple of men ahead to secure the holy man's aid. At daybreak the

next morning, our party, fully equipped for their work, were assembled by beat of kettledrum in front of the Aga's domicile ; and after we had partaken of a most substantial matinal collation, prepared by "the house" of our host, consisting of roast lamb, boiled fowls, *pilau*, and various kinds of *kabobs*, stews, and sweetmeats, we at last came to a round of coffee and pipes, and presently mounted our horses for a start. We had intended to form a long line of beaters across the valley and shoot our way on foot ; but after our heavy feed the carrying out of this arrangement was scarcely possible.

However, we had not gone far when a flock of bustard rose, and Vaughan, dismounting, made a splendid shot with a small-bore Daw rifle, bringing down a magnificent bird of nearly thirty pounds' weight, that was circling high over his head. This feat astonished me as much as it did the Georgians, who set up a shout as it came whizzing through the air and struck the ground with a loud-sounding thud. "There's a good day's rations for four at any rate," he said, quietly, as he reloaded ; "but you must admit that old Daw can bore a barrel as truly as either Westley-Richards or Purdey, my friend," he continued ; "for although I don't profess to shoot at ranges over three hundred yards, it's always my own fault if I miss anything the size of the crown of a hat at that distance with either barrel."

After such a demonstration there was no replying to his argument ; the bird was cleanly shot through the breast at a distance of quite three hundred yards, and my friend's reputation as a shot of no common order was henceforth noised through the valley. "Shabash, shabash !" cried the old chief, "the fiends had better not show themselves on the mountain to-morrow, as, if they do, we shall have such trophies as were never yet seen in Beuk-kara-su." The game being picked up, and made lawful meat for the faithful, notwithstanding every

sign of life had departed, the line moved on, and as it passed some low bush near a patch of cultivation, a sounder of hog was started, and leisurely trotted in the direction of the nearest lateral hill. A running fire was opened upon them by the whole line, and, although two or three of their number were obviously wounded, they managed to get into some thick cover and elude further pursuit.

The sun was now getting up, and, as we had a good journey before us, we called in our beaters, and made the best of our way towards a distant spur close to the foot of the mountain, where there were said to be a few huts chiefly used by herdsmen. After a tramp of about four hours we came to the spur indicated, but could see no signs of habitations; so, collecting some wood, we made a large fire on the summit of a low hill, and then putting some damp grass and leaves upon it, a dense column of smoke arose that could have been seen at several miles' distance.

This signal had the desired effect, for after an interval of half an hour's duration, the Aga's two men, the dervish, and the chiefs of two or three villages and their followers, joined our party. We had somehow mistaken the direction, and the spot appointed for our bivouac was still some little way farther on, in fact close under the foot of the mountain. The wood now became very dense, and we had to dismount from our horses and cut a path through the brushwood to enable our baggage animals to follow us. At last we came to a cleft about a hundred yards wide, apparently riven in the bare rocky wall of the mountain by some gigantic convulsion of nature; for the various strata on each side appeared to correspond, and even the different ledges, that were covered with all kinds of flowering shrubs and creeping plants, appeared to have corresponding cavities on the opposite side, from which they had been torn asunder. That this chasm had been formed several centuries

ago was proved by the ruins of an old Greek temple with carved Doric marble columns, that was built on an elevation close against the almost perpendicular face of the precipice; and by two Moslem shrine-like erections, one resembling a mosque from its broken and dilapidated minarets, and the other a tomb with a dome. Both these constructions, although in ruins, were of a much later date than the Greek edifice, and amongst their *débris* I found evident signs that some extensive Greek temple had been despoiled for building materials; as large marble columns and delicately carved blocks of marble had been indiscriminately used with unhewn stones in their construction, the former having belonged to a far anterior age, when the Greeks were rulers in the land.

As soon as we had reconnoitred the place, tents were pitched and shanties constructed for the whole party; a couple of oxen were killed with great ceremony for the use of the camp; and in the course of a few hours every belly was full, and each heart contented as its possessor smoked the pipe of peace round the huge log fire of the Fehringee Bey.

After a solemn smoke, the Aga shook himself together, drank a pull of sherbet, which, *entre nous*, was good stiff half and half brandy punch, and made a short pithy oration; which was somewhat to the effect that his old friend, the Ingleese Bey, who had fought by his side at Kurukdére and Ingendére against the Moskofler, having turned up with his friends in these parts, he was bound to show him every attention, and give him the welcome of a brother. The Bey having made up his mind to go up the haunted mountain to shoot bears, beasts, or *afrits* of defiled ancestors, if they would only show themselves, it behoved him and his people to accompany him. Here the dervish chimed in, and, to my surprise, showed himself a saner man than any of the party, for he ridiculed the idea of the mountain being haunted, and declared that, although it

was swarming with animals of the brute creation, not an *afrit* dare come within a day's march of the holy shrine. I found to my surprise that the dervish was a Hindostanee fakir, who had wandered on foot from Northern India through Cashmere and Cabul to Persia. After having made the pilgrimage to Mecca, he had found his way from Suez to Asia Minor, and had intended to get to Stamboul, when he was laid up with rheumatism, which obliged him to remain where he was, dependent for subsistence on alms and wild fruits.

Finding that I spoke Hindostani, and had passed many years in India, he became wild with excitement, and told me that in his youth he had been the body servant of an officer of the 16th Lancers until he died; and I have no doubt but that his story was true, for the names of Thackwell, Havelock, and Dick Pattinson Sahib—the latter of whom was a dear old pal of mine—cropped up over and over again as he told me his early history. Having gleaned what information I could from him about the game on the mountain, and the best route to take in its ascent, I handed him over to the charge of Ali and Cassim, and bid them take care of him, and furnish him with a warm rug to keep away rheumatics, so that he might be fit to pilot us up the mountain in the morning. Everything being arranged satisfactorily, the night guards were posted, and we turned in and enjoyed a capital night's rest; sleeping through two or three night alarms, caused by the visits of a pack of wolves, who were doubtlessly attracted towards our camp by the smell of the meat and the bleating of the sheep. The Circassians, who took their turn at night duty with the rest, awoke me at dawn, and I found most of our people astir round the fires broiling meat or making coffee. Our tents, which were impervious to any weather, being made of Cording's waterproof canvas, were packed up so as to be carried on men's heads; a goodly supply of food was got ready; and our flock of

sheep and goats were ordered to be driven up in the rear. Our horses, oxen, and heavy gear were left under an escort behind.

The dervish, who showed signs of recent ablutions, and who had trimmed his beard, made his appearance in one of Steuart's old shooting coats, armed with a boar-spear instead of his staff; and, although he complained of aching pains in his shoulder, he managed to get over the ground very well. Under his guidance the Circassians, and some of the Georgians, who had axes and billhooks, enlarged a track through the underwood, which, from the number of slots, appeared to be a well-frequented deer-run, until we came to an open space caused by the interposition of a bare ledge of rock. Crossing this, our guide pursued his way unhesitatingly, evidently guided by signs visible only to himself. Muscular in frame, but gaunt and emaciated from sickness, his large and deep sunken eyes glared wildly for a moment, and then he stopped short, his attention being evidently attracted by some slight noise. At this moment I detected the sound of a rolling stone, and, looking up, I saw a female bear and two half-grown cubs making their way up the side of the hill by a line parallel to our own course. Steuart saw her as soon as I did, and we fired almost simultaneously, when a great brown mass came tumbling down the hill, and the father of the family was on his hind legs in our midst almost as soon as the smoke had cleared away. Although he appeared as suddenly as if he had risen from the ground, like the ghost in a play, he found a warm reception; for Steuart and I gave him the contents of our second barrels, whilst the dervish administered the *coup de grâce*, by driving a boar-spear into his chitterlings, and he subsided with a long hollow moan. Having reloaded, we made after the female, whom we found *in extremis*, with her two cubs playing beside her. These were soon caught with the aid of our dogs, made secure with dog chains, and left in charge of a party of six, who were told off to skin and cut up the bear's

meat. We continued the ascent, and, getting into more open ground, passed over two or three rich grassy glades, intersected by belts of fine trees, amongst which the walnut, then in full bearing, was conspicuous. Here we found numerous slots of deer, and twice we reared hog, but did not fire at them lest we should disturb nobler game. The deer-run we were following up now led across a bare rocky slope, and beyond this we had to scramble over huge boulders of rock piled one on another in chaotic confusion. Travelling was hard work now, and it seemed to be becoming more difficult as we advanced; but the black summit loomed at no great distance; so, after a drink at a bright purling stream and a few minutes' rest, we again girded up our loins, and after another hour's fatiguing climb, stood upon the plateau, at the extreme end of which rose the black mass of the Sas-ka-sundook.

The plateau was overgrown with grass, ferns, and juniper bushes, which in many places were trodden down by deer and other wild animals, whose run was everywhere to be seen. From the crest of the summit, we saw mountains all around us; some in continuous ranges, and others rising alone and isolated, but all standing out against the bright blue sky in clear, sharp, and well defined outline. We had no barometers with us to ascertain the altitude we had attained, but it must have been at least seven thousand feet above the plains below, for the air was cool and bracing even at noon-day.

After a short consultation with the Aga, it was resolved to choose a suitable place for a camp, and remain for a few days on the mountain. We therefore reconnoitred the position, and finding a fine purling spring of water, we selected a spot sheltered from the wind by two massive boulders of rock, and forthwith commenced to establish our bivouac. Whilst our people were collecting huge logs of wood and constructing huts, we strolled to the peak, which from the plateau was easily

surmounted ; and there we sat for a couple of hours, smoking, and taking our *kieff*, and gazing into the illimitable space before us, the view ending in the blue ether that hung over the low-lying plains of Anatolia. We carefully examined the ravine below us with our binoculars and telescopes, but not a sign of game did we see, although we knew that the woods must be full of deer. Whilst we were speculating upon our prospects of sport, and arranging for the morrow's proceedings, Ali came up with the intelligence that a number of big goats were browsing quietly on the other side of the hill, and that we could easily get within shot. Without a moment's delay we picked up our rifles and made tracks after the Circassian, who had left his brother watching the game whilst he gave us the intelligence. We found Cassim lying his full length on the ground, with his head stretched over the steep perpendicular scarp of a precipice at least two hundred feet deep. Following his example, we all craned over the brink, and right below us, upon a jutting ledge of rock that appeared to hang in mid-air, were five buck ibex quietly browsing. It was no easy matter to get a sight of them, as the ground sloped towards the brink of the scarp, and it would have been dangerous work to have attempted to shoot them from that position. So, leaving Cassim on the watch, Vaughan took one side, whilst Steuart and I clambered along the other. After some rather ticklish climbing, we managed to ensconce ourselves on a jutting ledge of rock that commanded a view of the abyss below, but, although the ibex were in full view, they were almost out of range for anything but a chance shot. Such being the case, I bid Steuart keep a look-out in case they took alarm and came that way, whilst I returned to where I had left Cassim. There I found Vaughan, who could find no favourable place from which he could get within range, although there were several gaps which commanded one of the approaches to the ledge on which they were

standing. I went with him to the nearest, and having posted him, I told him I would alarm the game, which must pass within range of either Steuart's post or his own. I then returned to Cassim, and, fastening a rope round a boulder of a rock, I attached the other end to my waist-belt, where I made it fast ; then crawling on my belly to the brink of the scarp, I bid Ali sit firmly on my legs, while Cassim reached me my rifle, and I was thus enabled to get into such a position that I could use my rifle effectually. The five ibex, all unconscious of danger, were within very easy range ; so, selecting the buck with the finest horns, I aimed at the centre of his withers, and he dropped without a struggle. I was not so successful with my next shot, for the smoke hung and partially obscured my view, and the second buck, who had gained some distance before I fired, only slightly struck in the hind quarters, was going away as if unhurt, when he received his quietus from Vaughan, who shot him cleanly through the head as he passed his post. The remaining three, with five or six others who had been lying concealed from our sight, dashed at full speed past Steuart, who, firing into the brown of them, by good luck managed to kill one outright, and paralyse a second with a bullet through the spine ; whom he afterwards put out of pain by a well-directed shot in the head. After I had fired, and scrambled back on to *terra firma*, the question arose how we were to get the game now we had killed it ; for the ledge on which the ibex lay appeared to be quite inaccessible from the summit. I therefore sent the Circassians to reconnoitre the spot from below, and after a good deal of trouble the heads and skins were obtained, but the flesh was too rank for food.

We now returned to our encampment, and found that the Aga had sent the bulk of the people to the camp below to pass the night, and instructed them to beat up a densely wooded ravine the next day, so as to drive whatever game it might con-

tain in our direction up the hill. This was a bright idea of the old chief, and we were highly satisfied with the arrangement. The evening was chilly, but we kept up an immense fire, round which we sat eating, talking, smoking, and drinking whisky toddy until, overcome by drowsiness, we could hardly keep our eyes open ; when we turned in and slept as only hunters can sleep.

The elevated plateau on which we were encamped was lovely beyond conception in the early morning ; but the change of climate from the plains below was clearly demonstrated, as at dawn the ground glistened with hoar frost, and it was so cold that the Aga, who could hardly sleep, had kept some of his people up all night long to replenish the fire. We were not, however, so susceptible to the change, or perhaps we were better provided, as our tent, made by Cording of strong waterproof material, was impervious to cold or damp ; and besides we were amply provided with waterproof sheets and rugs, which, although much lighter and less cumbrous than the Georgian sheepskin *poshacs*, were more effective in keeping out the cold. As we were not bound to keep our gear and *impedimenta*, as Cæsar very justly termed his baggage, under the regulation weight, we all indulged in luxuries, and were each provided with an inflatable air-bed and bath, so that we could not only turn in as comfortably as if we were "at our inn," but also turn out fresh and clean in the morning fit for a day's work. I know that some travellers abjure ablutions as a matter of principle ; but I believe in the old axiom that "Cleanliness is next to godliness," and that a good tub after a hard day's work is an admirable restorative to the powers of nature, having a wonderful recuperative effect upon the appetite. This is my own experience, consequently a folding-up bath always forms a part of my travelling equipment.

We had a famous breakfast upon the broiled remains of the

bustard shot by Vaughan, and it was decided *nem. con.* that *coûte que coûte*, we must never allow a chance of bagging a bustard to escape us; as, when kept for a couple of days, and buried in the ground so as to become tender, it is the most juicy and at the same time the best flavoured of game birds. After a smoke, one of the Aga's people brought the intelligence that he had seen two columns of smoke at the base of the hill, which was the signal for us to take up our position at the head of the ravine, up which the beaters were about to drive the game. Having seen to our arms, we strolled round to the crest of the hill, and each took up a position from whence he could command a fair view of the ground below where the game was expected to break. Vaughan and Steuart having chosen their posts, which were to the right about two hundred yards asunder; I struck off to the left, and, guided by one of the Circassians, managed to scramble down to an overhanging ledge or placer of rock, from which I had a capital bird's-eye view of the whole ravine, as well as of Steuart's and Vaughan's positions on the cliffs above. The Aga accompanied me, and having made known my station by waving a handkerchief until it attracted their attention, so as to prevent their firing in our direction, we wrapped ourselves up in our rugs, for the air was extremely chilly, and, as the Aga said, smoked the pipe of patience. I did not ask him to refrain from smoking, as the wind blew right in our faces, and would carry away any taint in the air that tobacco might leave. The panorama stretched before our view was very beautiful, and, although perhaps somewhat tame and wanting in grandeur when compared with some of the mountain scenery of the majestic Himalayas—amongst which I had wandered for many months,—still it was a source of infinite delight to me to examine minutely with my powerful telescope every rugged feature of the varied landscape that extended for many miles below us; and to cogitate upon the mighty

convulsion of nature that had riven the side of the mountain, torn asunder the almost perpendicular granite scarp, and hurled the monstrous boulders, cleft and shattered, into the disjointed masses and chaotic piles that now, covered with forest verdure, brought to mind some mighty ruin overgrown with ivy and grand even in its desolation. I do not think that the scene from the extreme summit of a mountain must necessarily be the most striking, for the first sensation of the prospect from the top is simply that of immensity as the eye dwells over the vast extent of undulating country below that is only limited by the dim blue haze of the distance. In the ascent a traveller will be constantly arrested by the charming pictures seen through broken vistas that every turn in the winding road will reveal; pictures, that, if they do not possess the sublimity of the sea of space seen from the extreme altitude, gain many beauties in the nicer articulation of the different peaks and cliffs jutting up in strange isolation from the hanging woods below. I have often thought that the charming views of mountain scenery which are the most strongly impressed upon my mind presented themselves in these momentary half-glimpses that from time to time are obtained in the ascent. There is no mountain scenery that does not require its acquaintance to be cultivated before we can fully appreciate its supreme beauty, varied features, and changing aspects; but then its subtle influences enter the soul by many doors; and the true lover of nature never tires of the numberless picturesque charms that are ever to be found in its woody glens and rocky retreats.

While I was musing dreamily, and the Aga was puffing lazily away, and trying to make one circle of smoke pass through another for want of some other diversion, I heard a slight rustling noise below, and presently a single hind emerged from a patch of cover, and stood sniffing in the air; with her great ears moving suspiciously backwards and forwards, as if to drink

in some fancied sound. She was evidently not quite satisfied ; for now and again, after cropping a mouthful of grass, she would start forward, paw the ground impatiently, and look round as if she had heard or smelt something. She was now joined by a second hind, and presently up clattered a large herd of stags and hinds, intermixed in single file, and making their way under the crest of the hill towards the ambuscades of my friends. The last of all to show up was a very dark red stag, with beautiful spreading antlers ; he was picking his way leisurely up the hill, at about 200 yards' distance, when I brought the sight of my express 500-bore rifle—a *chef d'œuvre* of Westley-Richards'—to bear point-blank against his brawny shoulder, and pulled trigger. With a startled toss of the head, and a leap into the air, he ran about forty yards, and then fell stone dead. The express bullet is a short conical projectile, hollowed at the point like a shell, but without any bursting charge, and propelled by a very large charge of powder, which drives the light bullet with great velocity. On striking the object aimed at, the apex of the projectile has its hollow fore end opened out by the shock, in the shape of a mushroom ; or sometimes, when the charge of powder used is excessive, the whole bullet after striking is broken up into fragments, which spread and take different courses, inflicting a terrific wound. These small-bores, although the *ne plus ultra* of weapons for deer-stalking, on account of their long point-blank range and low trajectory, are not sufficiently effective against the larger animals ; such as bison, elephant, or the feline race, as they will not penetrate or smash the larger bones as a heavy, solid, hardened projectile will. They are, however, admirable weapons for all ordinary purposes ; the only real disadvantage being, that from the smallness of the hole the bullet makes on entering, and from the fact that it rarely passes through an animal of any size, although the quarry may be mortally hit, there is very

seldom the slightest sign of blood upon the trail ; so that tracking up a wounded animal is rendered more difficult than under ordinary circumstances.

Soon after the echoes of the report of my rifle had ceased reverberating amongst the faces of the cliffs, a regular file-firing commenced from the upper ledge, and back broke the panic-stricken herd right past my post, which gave the Aga and myself a famous opportunity, for we each bagged a hind, and a stag went away hard hit. We had hardly reloaded, when groups of deer began to run across all the open glades that lay below us, sometimes gazing back in the direction of the beaters, and then looking up hesitatingly towards the crest of the hill, as if aware of their danger and unwilling to come on.

Finally they made a rush, and a mass of dun hides and tossing antlers passed before us in a long stream ; selecting the best heads, it was the work of only a few seconds to bring down five noble stags and wound three others, two of which were eventually recovered. The Aga was not idle ; although, being armed with a muzzle-loader, he only got a couple of shots, with which he succeeded in killing a stag and mortally wounding a hind. Unfortunately, upon reaching the crest of the hill, the great body of the herd, alarmed at the firing, broke away to my left over the plateau, and entered another deep corrie ; only a few straggling groups making their way to the right past Vaughan's and Steuart's posts ; but they got several shots, and besides killing three stags and four hinds, they bagged a magnificent white wolf, evidently an albino, from his pale colourless eyes. There must have been at least two hundred deer driven up in this beat, and amongst us we managed to bag nineteen deer and a wolf. The beaters now came straggling up, and informed us that two bears, besides several deer, had broken back through their line at a point where the undergrowth was very dense. We were however

extremely well satisfied with our day's work, as we had provided sufficient venison to keep our beaters in food for some days.

Our next task was to collect the game, and bring it to camp ; which was an affair requiring time, as the hill-side was steep, and each deer had to be slung to long poles and carried on the men's shoulders. At last they were all brought up, and awaited dissection ; which act was speedily performed, for the men were quite up in that kind of work ; and considering the variety of tools used—swords, yataghans, daggers, knives, and axes—the quarters were severed and the chins divided with the dispatch and precision of experienced *charcutiers*.

The distribution of this meat, which might be roughly estimated at about thirty hundredweight, was quickly effected by the Aga himself, who apportioned to each hamlet that sent out its contingent of men, what he considered its fair quota ; an arrangement that gave universal satisfaction. We had now had a surfeit of deer driving, and determined to "up sticks" and get down again to the valley, as our people were not prepared for bivouacking at an elevation where the ground every morning was covered with hoar frost. A general move was therefore made ; our gear, being carefully packed in as light loads as possible, was distributed amongst the people, and a couple of hours before sunset we were again comfortably established in our old quarters at the base of the mountain, near the old Greek temple. Here we were joined by a number of villagers, who came to see the Aga and his Feringhee friends ; several of their women accompanied them, and our camp began to look like an Eastern fair. I gave directions to kill some oxen and sheep for our guests, and had huge log fires made, which lighted up the whole glen ; and after a somewhat sumptuous feast we were most agreeably entertained by some very creditable singing and dancing, accompanied by soft-toned stringed instruments, somewhat resembling citherns. Several verses

were sung by an *improvisatore*, in which I heard my name and the Aga's coupled, that created an absolute *furor* amongst the bystanders ; who all joined in chorusing the last couplets until the whole glen reverberated with the strain. This entertainment was kept up for some hours after we had made our *congé* and retired, and it formed an admirable *finale* to a glorious day's sport.

CHAPTER II.

BEAR-HUNTING IN THE CAUCASUS.

HAVING accepted the hospitality of the Hlori Bey, I was staying at his konac, on one of the spurs of the Caucasus, about thirty miles from Suchum Kaleh, when news was brought to the camp that the lair of an immense bear had been discovered, whose depredations were severely felt during the winter months, when, emboldened by hunger, he was in the habit of carrying off horses picketed close to the hamlet.

I decided to beat the bear out if possible ; and after a long smoking match and some talk with the Bey as to the best mode of proceeding, he went to warn his people to be in readiness to start at the first appearance of dawn on the morrow, and I crept into my tent. Being tired, I was soon in a sound sleep, from which I was awakened by some one, as I thought, unceremoniously shaking me by the shoulder ; but the visitor proved to be a prowling half-famished jackal, which was trying to drag away the buffalo robe which served as an outer covering. I scared him away by shouting, and he vented his indignation by setting up a melancholy howl, which started a most infernal chorus from half-a-dozen packs in the neighbouring woods ; but being well accustomed to such "jungle melody," I turned over and once more composed myself to sleep.

When I awoke the next morning I found my followers busily employed in rubbing down the horses, and the whole of the male portion of the tribe, with the exception of a few left to guard the village, preparing for the field. I gave myself a

shake like a water-spaniel, and washed out my mouth (the ordinary toilet of a hunter of the deep jungle, who generally performs his ablutions in the first stream he comes to); then, after hastily swallowing a cup of coffee and a biscuit, I mounted my horse and hastened the departure of the party, which consisted of about forty individuals, most of whom were mounted upon rough mountain ponies, and armed with matchlocks, pistols, attaghans, &c.

The track lay through a gorge in the mountains, and, when day broke, a magnificent scene was presented, as the sun dispelled the fog and mists which seemed to cling to the gigantic masses of rock, piled on each other in endless variety of shape and extraordinary confusion; but I felt too much absorbed in surmising upon the different kinds of large game that were likely to be met with in such a vast extent of virgin forest, to pay much attention to the picturesque beauties that lay in my path.

After about three hours' riding we came to a large log cattle-shed, used only in the summer months, when the best pasturage is to be found on the lower spurs of the mountains; here we had to leave the horses under charge of a guard, as the track became impracticable for them.

The Hlori chief described this bear to be a terrible animal, standing as high as a pony, but as I had a ten-gauge double gun, a rifle, and a brace of revolvers, I considered myself more than a match for him.

The herdsman now led the way, and under his guidance we climbed, in Indian file, a steep rocky hill, which caused us to puff and blow, and made our knees tremble before we got to the top; where, by dint of scrambling on our hands and knees, creeping along the edges of break-neck precipices, and hanging on to perilous ledges, we managed to work our way along the crest until we came to a deep rocky ravine on the other side.

This appeared to have been denuded of the dense bush that generally covered the face of the country, by the violence of numerous mountain torrents, which, when swollen by the rains, or the melting of the snow, dash down steep descents with immense force, and sweep away all the underwood in their course. Here our guide assured us the lair was; and, indeed, it looked a likely place to meet with queer customers, for in all my peregrinations I never saw a wilder country.

After an hour's careful investigation, during which I came across several tracks of red and roe deer, hogs, wolves, jackals, and foxes, as I was crossing a patch of sand in the dry bed of a stream, I perceived the fresh foot-prints of a bear, which I instantly saw must be a very large one, from his long stride and the size of his pugs, my hand hardly covering them.

I followed the trail for some distance, but lost it on some rocky ground, and was making casts in different directions in order to regain it, when some of the Bey's dogs, which had gone on some distance ahead, gave tongue, and immediately afterwards I heard a sullen roar, followed by four or five dropping shots. I sprang upon a boulder of rock, and discovered a dirty-white looking bear in full pursuit of four or five Abassians, who were running shrieking up the hill-side about two hundred yards distant. One of them in his frantic fright tripped over a stone, and before he could rise the brute was upon him. Although the hind quarters of the animal only were presented to me, I threw up my rifle and let drive; whether it was that my hand was unsteady that morning, or that I feared killing the man, I know not, but the first bullet fell short; the second, however, struck fair, and the bear, with a sharp hoarse cry of pain, quitted the fallen man and made after the rest. I re-loaded as quickly as possible and ran towards the fallen man, when I again saw Bruin for a moment, and got a couple of snap shots at him as he bolted into some cover, having been turned



by a straggling volley from some of my gang and the Bey's people. I found the youth who had fallen into the bear's clutches severely bitten in the shoulder, besides having his sides clawed, being altogether considerably bruised and shaken, though not dangerously hurt; so, after bandaging his wounds as well as I could, I collected the people together and prepared to make another effort to dislodge Bruin from his shelter.

One of my people had seen him enter some thick underwood between two large rocks, and I tried to coax the dogs to go in and drive him out; but it was of no use, they only ran yelping round the thicket. Two of their number had been killed in the first onset, and some of the others severely mauled, which damped the courage of the rest; so finding that nothing could be effected with their assistance, I posted all the people in groups as safely as I could at one end of the cover, in case the game might break without showing fight, and followed up the trail—which was very plainly marked with blood—alone.

The brushwood was very thick and much impeded my movements, so I got on but slowly; but by dint of creeping on my hands and knees and scrambling, I managed to get some distance into the cover, when I heard a savage growl, followed up by a low grunting noise, evidently not far from me. I peered through the bush, but could see nothing; so, resting my rifle against the trunk of a tree, I endeavoured to swarm up, in order to have a better look round. I had hardly raised myself a couple of feet from the ground, when, with a terrific roar, the brute, which must have got wind of me, charged. Luckily the bush was so thick in front that he could not get at me very easily, but had to make a turn, which gave me time to seize and cock my rifle; and as his monstrous head, with flashing eyes and open jaws, appeared about a couple of paces from me, I gave him the contents of both barrels, which almost stunned him, for he spun

round and round, and gave me time to follow them up with my smooth bore, both bullets taking effect in the head ; but such was the enormous tenacity of life, that he managed to tear out of the cover, rolling over and over as he went.

After reloading carefully, I followed up and found him sprawling about on the ground, moaning piteously and evidently very sick. As I got out of the bush he caught sight of me, and made another headlong charge, reeling from side to side as he came ; but I stopped him with another bullet in the head, which made him bite the dust. He rose again, and got up on his hind-legs as if to look round ; whilst in this position he looked a fearful object, standing, as he did, with his fore-paws raised, about seven feet high, and the blood pouring in torrents out of his mouth. I now had a fair shot at his big brawny chest, and inflicted a mortal wound. On receiving it he uttered a strange gurgling sound, and rolled over and over, seizing the root of a tree between his teeth with his last dying effort ; a shiver passed over his limbs, and the game was over. He proved to be an immense bear, standing over four feet high at the shoulder, and from the number of men it took to lift him, I should think he could not have weighed less than eight hundred pounds. He appeared to be of the same species as the hill bear of Cashmere and the Himalaya, being covered with long whity-brown hair. He had received eleven wounds, six of which were in the head ; but I found that the round leaden balls from my smooth-bore had flattened on the skull without penetrating, whilst the conical projectile from my rifle had splintered the bone. By the time the skin was taken off the carcass cut up, and the flesh divided amongst the people, the sun had sunk low in the west, and we had to beat a hasty retreat in order to reach our bivouac—the cattle-shed—before night-fall. There we found a supply of sheep, fowls, and forage had been brought in during our absence ; so after we had

pitched our tents and made the "inner man" comfortable, our battle with the bear was fought over again as we reclined round an immense fire, until some of us began to nod; when we rolled ourselves up in our blankets and turned in for the night, well satisfied with our day's sport.

CHAPTER III.

LIFE AMONGST THE BEDOUINS OF TÓR

BETWEEN the gulfs of Suez and Akaba lies the peninsula of Sinai, one of the most remarkable regions on the face of the earth, not only on account of its interesting associations with the earliest history of the world, but also for its peculiar natural physical features.

Its history may be said to commence and end with the tradition of the wanderings of the Israelites, as described in the Pentateuch; and from the earliest records it appears that the grand object of every traveller visiting these parts has been to connect the marvellous events recorded with the scene of action. *In this none have succeeded.* The route of the twelve tribes has never been satisfactorily determined; the spot where they are said to have passed through the Red Sea is unknown; and it is still an open question whether Mount Serbál, Jebel-Mousa, Mount Catherine, Ras-Safsafah, or Jebel Monéjah is the Sinai of the Exodus, where it is alleged "the Law was given to Moses." On each of these subjects the most learned explorers either disagree on all material points, or decline to give any decisive opinion; which latter course is perhaps the wisest, as at the present day there is no conclusive evidence to identify the history of the earliest ages with the locality.

It is now over 3,400 years ago since the Israelites are said to have passed from Rameses, in Egypt, to Jericho beyond Jordan; and although the line of march is described with wonderful precision in the tradition, and the names of *forty-*

two halting-places are recorded, not a single place mentioned tallies, either in name or description, with any locality known in the present day, with the exception of the point of starting and the ultimate destination. Thirty-four centuries is a great gap even in the history of the world; during that period the natural features of the country which served as ancient landmarks must have been entirely changed by the action of water and volcanic agency, so that the present topography serves but little to identify events that occurred at such a remote period.

It was not for the purpose of "treading in the footsteps of Moses," or "walking in the paths of the chosen people," that I found my way to these regions; for I confess to being much more interested in the doings of Disraeli and his party in the present day, than in following up the track of his ancestors, *where the "trail" is cold, and all "sign" obliterated.*

I had on several occasions passed the arid-looking mountains of Tôr on my passages up and down the Red Sea, and each time resolved to make an expedition into the interior whenever an opportunity should occur. In the autumn of last year, whilst staying at Suez, I had the good fortune to fall in with M. Allard, an engineer, who was engaged in the construction of the greatest work of the age—the Suez Canal—and we determined to cruise along the coast to the port of Tôr, and there hiring camels, to visit the so-called "holy places," and shoot a few ibex on the adjacent mountains. My old friend Colonel Kenedy, who was at Cairo, got me a *teskere* or firman from one of the ministers, which was thought necessary to insure us a safe conduct amongst the tribes; and M. Allard obtained a letter of introduction to the Prior of the Convent of Mount Sinai from the head of some branch establishment.

As we only intended to be away three weeks, our preparations and establishment were not very large, and three camels

were accounted sufficient to carry the whole of our gear. One of Edgington's "Wigwam" tents, waterproof sheets, bedding, and clothes formed the first load; our armament, stores, comestibles, cooking utensils, and servants' rugs the second; whilst three large bullock-leather water-skins were the destined load for the third.

Our stores consisted of a bag of rice, curry stuff, a case or two of wine, some condiments, a dozen tins of *pâté de foie gras*, two dozen two-pound tins of soups, a goat-skin full of coffee, another of tobacco, a stock of onions, limes, and charcoal, six sheep, and two dozen fowls.

I had three of my own special followers. First, my henchman, Achmed, an Arnaout, who had served in the Bashi-Bazouks, and whom I seduced out of the Land Transport Train; a strong, active fellow, who could hold his own against any three ordinary Egyptians; secondly, a Frenchman, Le Sage (who ought rather to have been named "Le Sotûl," for he always got tight when he had a chance), a first-rate cook, and an honest, well-meaning fellow, *mais un blagueur de première force*; and last, but not least, a huge Seede, a *ci-devant* fireman in one of the steamers from Aden, who had been out with me on two trips to Jebel Ataka, a high range to the south-west of Suez.

M. Allard had two Egyptian servants, both very fair specimens of the country, who could turn their hands to anything; and he also engaged as guides two young Bedouins, who had come into Suez with loads of charcoal, and knew the country. We took no dragoman with us, as both Allard and myself had a fair knowledge of the vernacular, and could make ourselves perfectly understood.

One of Allard's friends in the Consulate lent us a large half decked boat of about twelve tons, with two masts, and large lateen sails, which afforded more than ample accommodation

for all our party, so we offered a free passage to an Arab merchant and his servant, who were going to Tôr with an assortment of "knickknacks" and cloth for sale or barter; and he in return gave us a good deal of valuable information as to the country, and promised to procure us camels at a moderate rate of hire, upon our arrival at Tôr.

All being ready, we started at daylight on Sunday morning with a fair wind, which sent our craft along merrily until ten o'clock, when it grew light, and gradually died away.—I forgot to mention that we hired two Suez boatmen to assist in working the boat, both sturdy, strong-looking fellows, but with anything but prepossessing physiognomies; in fact, one of them was as sullen and morose a looking cur as I ever saw—a man "whose face would hang him." When the calm came on I ordered our people to get out the oars and pull ashore; for although we had every convenience for making a fire on board, I preferred to have the cooking done on land. The boatmen protested against pulling, and not only refused to take an oar, but were cheeky to Allard, who had engaged them. Knowing the danger of allowing even the appearance of insubordination in an expedition like ours, I determined to nip it in the bud, and make a severe example of the first offenders; so taking up one of the rhinoceros-hide coorbatches used in camel driving, I gave the sullen-looking party a couple of stinging cuts across the shoulders, at the same time bidding him turn to at the oars. Instead of doing this he attempted to draw his knife, but before he could get it out I gave him a right and left, straight from the shoulder, between the eyes, and dropped him into the bottom of the boat almost senseless. When he came round he began blubbering and calling on Allah; but as he was still sulky, and refused to take an oar, at a signal from me my fellows laid him on his face along a thwart, and whilst Achmed sat on his head, and the Seedee on his legs, I gave him a couple of dozen, well

laid on, which brought out the hallelujah chorus with every variation. I then made the second boatman take his place, and, whilst my hand was in, administered a dose of the same regimen, giving him only half the quantity, which he took without howling, simply grunting out "Taiheeb! Taiheeb!" ("Good!" "Good!") at every cut. This sharp treatment effected a complete cure, and was not again required; it taught both parties their true position; they turned to at once, and afterwards did as they were told without a murmur. With this class of people expostulation and reasoning are useless, and so much waste of time and breath. Blows are the only effective argument they can understand, and without their aid there is no getting on amongst the Egyptians, who are a stubborn race.

We landed on the Asiatic side, about ten miles south of Ain Mousa, "the wells of Moses;" and whilst our people were engaged in cooking, I strolled along the beach, and shot two brace and a half of curlew, and a couple of grey teal, to the intense astonishment and delight of the Bedouins, who had never seen birds shot flying before. Having dined, we re-embarked at about two in the afternoon; and a fresh breeze springing up, we carried on all night, being favoured by the moon, till at eleven the next morning we found ourselves abreast of the scarped cliff of Jebel Hummam. Here we landed and visited the hot springs and caves of Faraoun, or Pharaoh, near which place I killed a gazelle with No. 5 shot, as it started up from a bit of cover close under my feet. We performed our ablutions in the stream, close to the embouchure, where the water is tepid, and excited the intense surprise of the Bedouins, who watched me lather my head and beard in mute amazement. After we had dined we returned to the boat, hoisted up sail, and were again speeding through the green waters of the Red Sea. Keeping well away from the lee of the high land, a stiff breeze carried

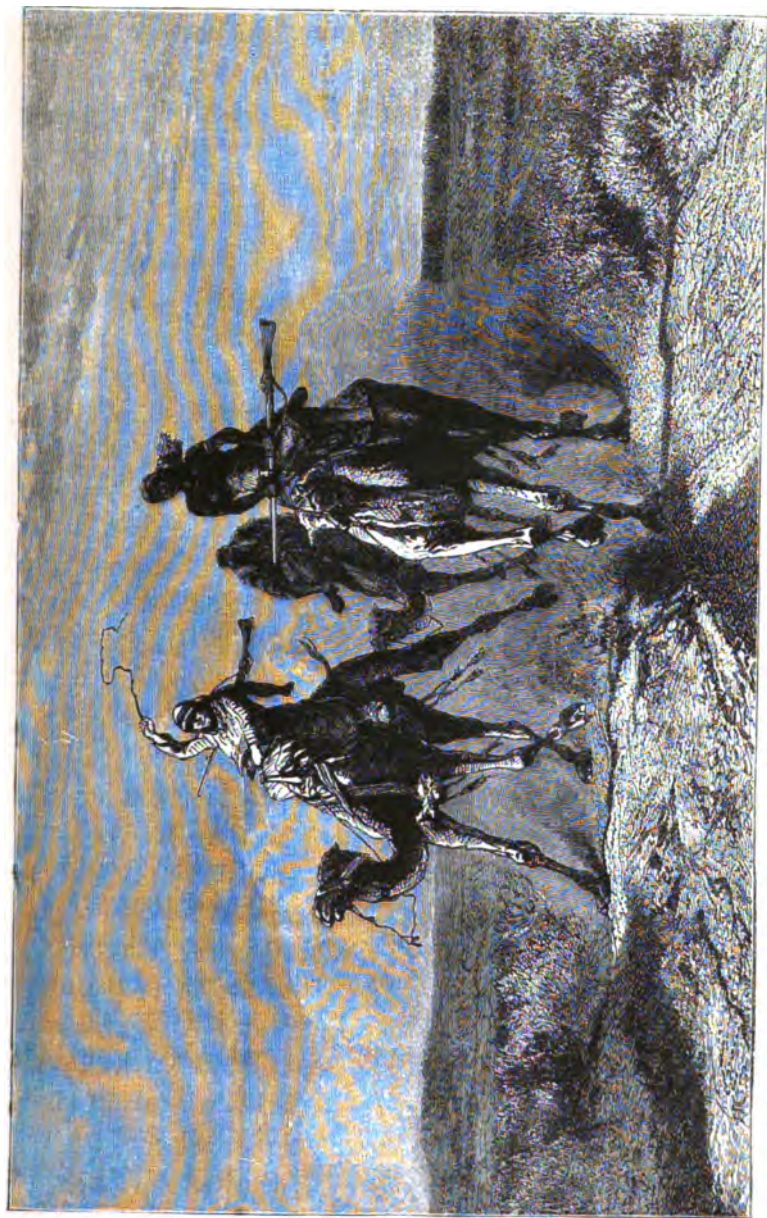
us along at a spanking rate, and the white foam in our wake, and the hissing of the water at the bow told me that our little craft was going the pace. With the exception of Achmed—who had implicit confidence in my navigation—as the wind freshened and the sea got up, the faces of my companions grew longer, and more grimly pale with fear; one after another remonstrated against my carrying on, and urged my making for the shore, and waiting until the gale subsided; but I laughed at their terrors, for the boat rode over the water like a bird, and I knew that we should be in smooth water after weathering Cape Ras Jehan; besides, it was impossible to land with such a sea running, as the boat would have been dashed to pieces against the scarped rocks that rose precipitately from the water's edge. I had the helm myself, and by keeping the craft in proper trim, with the exception of a little spray breaking over her half deck, she scarcely made any water; so after a time my people began to regain their equanimity, and amused themselves with spinning yarns. The next morning we arrived at Tôr, our port of destination; a miserable-looking place, inhabited by a few Arab shopkeepers and a heterogeneous breed of Greek Christians, who appeared to be anything but a desirable community to dwell amongst. On landing, Allard and I, preceded by our fellow-voyager, went to the head official of the village, a Hadji, who upon our exhibiting the *teskere*, was extremely civil, giving us coffee and pipes; he at once procured us four camels with their drivers and three hygeens or trotting camels, two of which were for our own riding, and the third for Le Sage, as in long journeys I always make it a practice to mount the *chef de cuisine*, lest he should be too fatigued to cook the dinner on arrival. I gave the Hadji a liberal bucksheech for the trouble he had taken, and he promised to look after our boat, and the two boatmen we were leaving behind to keep it in order.

He did not give us a very encouraging account of the game to be found in this district, but told us that on the mountain of Oommar there were plenty of wild goats, and procured us four Bedouins to serve as guides who knew their haunts. We encamped about two miles from the village, in a fine date tope close to the tepid springs of Ain Mousa, which are strongly impregnated with sulphur; and occupied ourselves in getting our gear into marching order. Achmet, who considered himself a judge of camel-flesh, chose our animals, and assured us that they were in famous marching condition, as they had plenty of fat on the hump, clean sinewy legs, and good feet.

The next morning soon after daylight we were *en route* for the interior, and passing in a north-easterly direction over a sandy plain, which extended between the mountains and the sea, entered the Ouadi Hebron, a gorge between two lofty ranges. Halting during the intense heat of the day under the grateful shade of some overhanging rocks, we continued our route in the afternoon until we came to a stream, where we encamped for the night. Dinner over, and all our animals being securely tethered and fed, our people made a fire of camels' dung and brushwood, round which we all sat to hold a consultation; and Achmet, by distributing a liberal allowance of coffee and tobacco to each of our followers, opened their hearts and made them glad. All Islam, whether Osmanlee or Arab, have an innate love of the narcotic berry; and although it is a luxury rarely to be met with in the desert, there is nothing more grateful to a Bedouin. With coffee and tobacco he is a happy mortal.

After a lengthened sojourn amidst the unnatural restraints ever attendant upon civilization, varied only by such transient excitements as "*the little village*" can give, a confirmed wanderer like myself finds it a relief to be once more in the wilds,

unfettered and untrammelled by laws and customs, and free to follow the impulses of his nature. At such a time I always feel that the bivouac watch-fire is my true home, and that I have led a roving life too long, and loved its freedom too well, ever again to relish a monotonous existence passed between four walls. The scene of our camp that night was one that Salvator Rosa would have delighted to picture. In the far west a blood-red African sun was setting in gorgeous splendour, and his radiance still lighted up the higher peaks and crests that rose above the sombre-coloured cliffs on either side the valley, and caused the ripples on the pool to glisten like burnished silver as they refracted back the light of departing day. Here and there the dark foliage of the wide-spreading carob was interspersed with clumps of fan-leaved palms, or the lighter verdure of the feathery tamarisk, and sensitive mimosa, which droops its leaves even when too roughly shaken by the wind. In the foreground was our tent, and near it our camels were lazily dozing, whilst all around were picturesque groups of swarthy figures reclining in all attitudes. As daylight faded, and the grey shadows deepened and gathered rapidly round, the flickering blaze of the watch-fire gave a mystic and almost weird-like appearance to the scene; while the shrill cry of the cicadi, the low melancholy sighing of the wind, the rippling murmurs of the stream as it wound its way unseen amid the sedges, the mysterious breathings or pulsations of Nature, and the wild music of the night, seemed to shed a magic-like influence upon the mind. It is at such an hour the sons of Ishmael love to gather together and relate their wild tales. Their thoughts veer back to the past, and memory awakens, with almost supernatural vividness, scenes of old joys and sorrows that have long slept, and would have been forgotten in the ordinary routine and bustle of an every-day life. Then old traditions are told that have been passed down from generation to generation, and in



TRAVELLING ON CAMELS.

this manner the earliest history of the world and the greater part of the mysterious events therein recorded were handed down from the days of the patriarchs until the age when writing was discovered. Can we wonder, then, at the apparent incongruities of a record, the events of which extend over a period of nearly six thousand years?

The next morning we started up the valley at daylight, and following the water-course, on each side of which was a narrow belt of date palms, tamarisk, and mimosa, after a four hours' march along a very well marked-out track we crossed a pass, "the Nagb Hebron," descended into a long winding valley, the Ouadi Es Slav, and again ascending the pass Nagb el Deira, encamped on the Ouadi el Racha, "the valley of repose." The next morning we were in sight of Jebel Mousa, and a short march brought us to the convent which, with its lofty embattled walls, square bastioned angles, and deserted watch-tower, looks more like a fortalice of feudal times than an abode of priests; and the resemblance is somewhat kept up by the entrance being situated some thirty feet from the ground. We, however, entered by the garden gate, which is strongly plated with iron, and after waiting a few minutes in an open balcony on which the chambers devoted to guests open, the superior and several of his brethren entered. He offered us accommodation in the convent, but for several reasons we preferred to encamp outside; and after thanking him for his proffered hospitality, we simply asked permission to look over the convent, which was immediately granted. We presented the letter of introduction we had brought with us, which the prior opened, and glancing at the signature, passed on to an attendant priest without reading. We then adjourned to the refectory, where coffee, raki made from dates, and different kinds of fruits were offered us.

We then were conducted round the building, which con-

sists of a large quadrangle divided into several courts, containing the Church of the Transfiguration, about a score of neglected-looking chapels dedicated to different saints, a library, cloisters for the monks, and a more modern-looking building for guests. The church is divided into nave and aisles by granite columns; the roof is blue, spangled with stars; and there are the usual priestly paraphernalia, consisting of gaudily-decorated images, pictures of saints and martyrs, silver lamps, gilt candlesticks, and such-like gear. We had to take off our boots before entering the chapel of the Burning Bush, which is considered "the Holy of Holies," as it is pretended that here the Lord appeared to Moses. We were also shown a sarcophagus of white marble, containing relics said to have belonged to St. Catherine, and the charnel-house, which was anything but an agreeable sight. Not being much interested even in live monks, I certainly cared less about dead ones, and was heartily glad to breathe the fresh air once more and get into the garden, which is kept in very tolerable order, and contains a good many fruit trees of different descriptions. Having had sight-seeing enough, I tipped '*a quid*' to our cicerone, which I thought was doing the thing handsomely; when, to my surprise, he contemptuously turned the coin over in his hand—as a London cabby would on receiving a sixpence—and had the cheek to lift up his fingers and demand three more. "The next time we come to Sinai," was my reply, as I buttoned up my pocket; and *the thing* in petticoats, with a ghastly grin, opened the gates, and we returned to our people, who had prepared us an excellent breakfast.

After doing ample justice to the good cheer, accompanied by four of our own people carrying our guns, lunch, water-skins, &c., and guided by a couple of Bedouin boys in the service of the convent, we set off to explore Jebel Mousa.

Passing behind the convent, we began to ascend by a zigzag

path in which steps were cut, which greatly facilitated our route. In a quarter of an hour we came to a spring of clear sweet water, delightfully situated under an overhanging rock, called by the Arabs Ain Jebel—"the well of the mountain." Further on we came across the ruins of two chapels, one dedicated to the Madonna, and the other to Elijah, who was said to have lived in a cave underneath. Then passing under two archways between the rocks, we arrived on the plateau, where there is a paved pool to collect the rain-water, and an old cypress, called by the monks—for what reason I know not—"Elijah's tree." Nine hundred feet higher than this plateau is the summit which, by tradition, is the spot where the Law was given to Moses. Here we found the ruins of a Christian church and a Mahomedan mosque—the cross and the crescent in close proximity—but little else worth seeing except an extensive view over the surrounding country, which is well described by Jeremiah, who calls it "a land of deserts and of pits, a land where no man passed through, and where no man dwells"—a howling wilderness where there was no water. Imagination cannot picture such a scene of endless desolation. On all sides rose range after range of bare and rugged mountains, sufficiently high to cast deep shadows over the sterile and dreary-looking valleys that intersect them, which with their sandy or stony beds, look like rivers without water. The slopes were furrowed by dark fissures and chasms that at one time might have been the beds of mountain torrents, but that they were not relieved by any trace of vegetation. Here were no variegated woods of pine, birch, and oak ; no ferns, bracken, pasture land, moss, or living verdure to take away from the utter lifelessness of the scene. Save the dismal moaning of the wind, as it swept past the scorched rocks and precipices, a death-like silence ever reigned. Here are heard no murmuring, purling streams, no sounds of falling waters. All nature appears dead,

for nothing grows, nothing stirs, nothing changes. All seasons are alike in this land of utter desolation, which may be likened to a hideous chaos before the germ of life was awakened.

We were glad to get away from this scene of eternal barrenness, and returned along the road made by order of Abas Pacha when he conceived the idea of building a palace on the mountain. On arrival in camp, we were somewhat disgusted to find that there were no signs of preparation for dinner, as Le Sage, our cook, and one of the padres, had been fraternizing, and were both in a maudlin state. I very unceremoniously started the monastic party back to his convent, and a few buckets of nearly ice-cold water from the well, soon brought Le Sage to his senses, and enabled him to carry on his culinary arrangements. This little *contretemps*, which delayed our dinner a couple of hours, however trying to our patience at the time, turned out lucky in the end, for just as we were about commencing operations, two American gentlemen, somewhat knocked up after a long march, rode up on camels and did us the honour of joining our party.

We had neither table nor chairs, but in the centre of the carpet, a tablecloth was spread, on which the viands were placed; and our mattresses being stowed round, we dined like the noble Romans we have all read about. Our cook, to make up for his delinquency, had bestowed extra care upon his cuisine, which was voted the best in the desert by long chalks. A case of Bordeaux was cracked, a brew of "Blue Ruin," such as Vickers only can distil, was concocted, and I never remember passing a more jolly evening. Long after the old monks had finished their "Kyrie Eleison,"—"Annie Laurie," "Le Vieux Drapeau," "The Star-Spangled Banner," and "The Bonnie Blue Flag," and such-like chants were borne on the night winds, and I dare say somewhat astonished a neighbouring camp of Egyptian soldiers.

Our guests had travelled from Suez by land, and were going to Petra *via* Akabah, and they tried hard to persuade us to accompany them, but unfortunately we could not spare the time. The next day we visited the block of isolated rock from which—according to tradition—Moses caused water to flow, and ascended to the summit of Mount Catherine, from whence we had a splendid view of the surrounding country. The panorama embraced the Serbal, with its five peaks, El Shomar, Jebel Mousa, Um Shaumer, the groves of Tôr, and the Red Sea; with the high mountains of El Yareeb, and El Zet, on the African shore. *En route* I shot a brace of red-legged partridges, and a couple of “conies,” animals of the same colour as a hare, and much resembling a very large guinea-pig. They have a very strong smell, and can scarcely be good to eat, notwithstanding the Arabs told me that some Europeans had eaten them. We all passed the evening together, and gave our followers and people a feast, at which our Bedouins were joined by a Towara Sheikh and several of his tribe, so that we had to double their allowance of sheep and rice. After our own dinner we sat in state, and were visited by the whole tribe then present, to whom I distributed coffee and tobacco, for which they appeared very grateful. Later on in the evening, the Binbashi, and several officers of the Egyptian detachment, came to see us; so our family circle began to assume rather gigantic proportions. Sending a score of youngsters to collect fuel, a cheerful fire was made, round which we all sat, and copious brews of coffee and sherbet were handed round by our people, who prided themselves upon the hospitality of their masters. Several Bedouin women, having got over their shyness, joined our circle, and after some little hesitation—perhaps caused by the presence of the Pacha’s officer—at the request of the Sheikh, they commenced “the Asamer,” their national dance. The younger girls joining hands, sang and

kept time to a measure, whilst the men clapped their hands and joined in the chorus. In the beginning, the performers were coy, and the movement was very slow; but warming up by degrees, they became extremely animated, their eyes sparkled with excitement, and the scene became very interesting. With the exception of an old party who regulated the time, the dancers seemed between the ages of thirteen and fifteen, and five or six of their number were very good-looking, having extremely white, even teeth, with olive complexions tinged with the ruddy glow of health. Although their only garment consisted of the ordinary blue chemise, open from the throat to the waist, which scarcely concealed the outlines of their lithe-some figures, there was no immodesty or indelicacy in the whole performance; on the contrary, several of the dances were very graceful. To the best dancers I distributed gilt bracelets and silver rings, of which I had brought a quantity for presents, and great was the rejoicing thereupon.

On the strength of my long beard, weather-worn phiz, general get-up, and knowledge of the language, Achmed had dubbed me "a Hadji," and in the extemporaneous songs that followed, I was welcomed by the tribe "as one who had been long away;" and it was evident that my party had gained greatly in the esteem of the Bedouins by not putting up in the convent. The festivities were kept up until a late hour, as long after we had retired I heard them chattering.

The next morning at daylight we bade our American friends adieu, and started in a northerly direction for Mount Serbal. Our route lay through barren valleys, and plains hemmed in by still more dreary-looking mountains; and crossing Nakh Hawa, "The Pass of the Winds," after a long and fatiguing march we halted in the Ouadi Feiran, where our camp was pitched by a beautiful spring in a palm grove. Here we found another Bedouin camp, the Sheikh of which paid us a visit in the

evening, and gave us two of his tribe for guides. As I told him of my intention of remaining here a few days to shoot, he advised our pitching the camp in Ouadi Aleiat, where we should be much nearer the haunts of the "bedan," or ibex ; so the next day, after visiting the ruins of the old town of Feiran, we changed our camp, and pitched our tent by a spring of pure cold water, in a gorge or cleft in the mountain ; a most delightful spot, shaded by overhanging rocks. The camels had great difficulty in making their way over the loose stones and masses of rock, so it was late in the day before we got comfortably established, and all our things in order.

At daylight the next morning, accompanied by eight Bedouins carrying our guns, ropes, food, water-skins, rugs, and waterproof sheet, we commenced the ascent of Serbal, which from the plain has certainly a more majestic appearance than any other mountain we saw. After about a couple of hours' hard climbing, we got to the ridge from which five isolated peaks rise ; and here we were glad to halt for a time and rest, as we were all somewhat fatigued. I had on two occasions seen the slots of ibex on our way up, and upon the ridge, which in some places was covered with dwarf shrubs and aromatic herbage, I found quite fresh "sign," which I determined to follow up ; whilst Allard made his way to the summit of one of the peaks, and two of the Bedouins climbed up another, from whence they were to make certain signals in case they saw any game. All tracking was impossible, and we had had hard work even to get along, as the ridge consisted of boulders and *débris* of grey granite, which often gave way under foot ; however, the Bedouins seemed to know every inch of the ground, and proved first-rate mountaineers. We descended a slope where the herbage, such as it was, appeared to grow more luxuriantly than in other places, and this they considered a certain find for ibex early in the morning and late in the after-

noon. They showed me two circles of stones where the Bedouin hunters used to lie in wait for them when they came to feed ; but none were to be seen, and I was on the point of moving from the place, when I heard a slight rattle of loose stones, and I saw a very large dog hyena scrambling down a gully about a hundred and fifty yards below the slope on which we were standing. It was apparently hard work for an animal of his build, which is most unsuited for going down hill, and he stopped every now and again, perhaps to listen. I did not think of firing at him, but the Arabs begged me to kill him on account of the ravages that the animals make amongst their goats ; so as he was standing with his head raised somewhat suspiciously in our direction, I threw up my rifle and dropped him, the bullet entering just below the ear. A moment afterwards I was sorry that I had fired, for three buck ibex, disturbed by the report, sprang up from behind a large rock, under the shade of which they must have been lying. Unfortunately, from the place where I was standing I could not see them until they were long out of range and scampering along the brow of the ridge above. The oldest of the Bedouins, who was himself an experienced ibex hunter, said he knew the spot they would make for ; so under his guidance I again clambered up the steep slope, and after a long scramble we passed between two of the peaks, making our way very gingerly over slabs of smooth granite to the edge of a crest, just below which seven ibex were grazing about two hundred yards distant. I drew back and paused a few moments to take breath, for the exertion had made me too unsteady to shoot well ; then shaking myself together, I again crept forward, and selecting a buck that appeared to have the longest horns, I dropped him stone dead with a ball through the shoulder, and with my other barrel brought a second to the ground, but almost immediately he regained his feet and bounded off as if

unhurt. Away dashed the Bedouins in pursuit, perfectly astounded at my having killed at what they considered so long a range, and I followed as fast as I could, my movements being considerably impeded from having to carry my rifle. When I got down to the spot where the first ibex fell, I waited, as my people were out of sight, having gone after the second. In a few minutes a loud shout of triumph told me that they had been successful, and half an hour afterwards they appeared with a fine young buck which they found dead, my bullet having entered the back and shattered the hind leg. As they had experienced great difficulty in carrying the carcass up the slope of the hill, it was resolved to cut them up where they lay, and I never saw game broken up more expeditiously. The skins were taken off in a most artistic manner, all in a piece, to serve for carrying water; and the best parts of the meat were cut off and carried with us, I reserving the heads and horns as my share. These ibex were of a different species to any I had hitherto killed, and differed from those of the Alps, Caucasus, Nilgherries, or Himalayas, being more like a goat, and not so delicately formed. The horns of the largest measured thirty-five inches along the curve, and were about nine inches in circumference round the base. They rise from the crest of the skull, and bend gradually backwards, almost describing the arc of half a circle. The anterior surface is ringed with bands, the number of which, it is said, denote the years of the animal's age. This theory is not, I think, to be relied upon, as I have killed a buck with thirty-seven such rings. The horns of the young one were much smaller. Their general colour was an ashy grey, deepening to black on the hind quarters, where the hair was long and shaggy. The beard of the larger one was black in colour and about eight inches in length. The females are very small in comparison with the males, and have short horns slightly curved backwards

they are also lighter in colour, and more delicately shaped. The report of my gun brought up Allard and the rest of our people. He had been to the summit of one of the peaks, and amused himself by copying some of the Sinaitic inscriptions that were carved on the rocks. Our people being heavily loaded, we were a long time scrambling down the mountain to our camp; and it was nearly dusk before we arrived at our bivouac.

Being somewhat stiff after our exertions, we passed the next day in camp, and I amused myself by preserving the ibex heads, and preparing them for being set up. The following morning at daybreak found us again clambering up the steep side of the mountain, and seeing no fresh signs of game upon our arrival on the ridge, we halted for an hour and breakfasted. We afterwards ascended two of the peaks in order to reconnoitre the ground more effectually, but had to be satisfied with a splendid view of the surrounding country, as not an ibex was to be seen. We had considerable difficulty in ascending, and much more in descending, the second peak; as in some places we had to cross along a narrow and uneven ledge of rock running along the scarp face of a cliff, when, if the head had turned giddy or the foot slipped, a drop of some hundreds of feet would have been the consequence. However, with the aid of my long rope we all got down safely, although with knees and hands somewhat excoriated by the sharp edges of rock. Although the air at this elevation was cool and refreshing, still the rays of the sun were intensely powerful, and to this cause I attribute our not falling in with ibex, who, like all other wild animals, remain in the shade during the heat of the day. We had but to look at each other's faces to see that our powers of exertion had been taxed to the uttermost, so after an hour's repose we retraced our steps to camp.

The next day we returned to the Ouadi Feiran, a great

resort of the Bedouin tribes, who lead the same primitive nomadic life as their forefathers, the patriarchs of the early ages, from whom they have inherited and preserved unchanged, their peculiar habits and customs. A race takes much of its character from the country in which it lives, and the wandering habits of the Bedouin were inculcated by necessity. The tribes are obliged to migrate according to season and the changes of the weather, as their existence depends upon water and pasturage. Having no fixed home, and being habituated to constant change, their wants are few; and their household gear and utensils are limited to a few necessary articles of the most simple description. Their only wealth consists of male and female slaves, herds of camels, sheep, and goats; the black huts, their only habitations, made of camels' or goats' hair; earthenware jars and pots, leather water-skins, and bags to contain clothes. Although Mahomedans in name, few amongst them can even repeat the prescribed form of prayer, and scarcely any can read the Koran. The only act of worship performed by any of our Bedouins, was a short invocation to the Deity, hastily muttered as the sun was rising, with their faces turned towards the East, but without dismounting from their camels. Notwithstanding their laxity in the ceremonial observances of their religion, they have many sterling good qualities. Their greatest fault, a common one, is an innate love of the almighty dollar, and an incapacity of distinguishing between *meum* and *tuum*; yet a guest and his property are sacred, and a Bedouin will defend both at the peril of his life. Generally they are men of few words, simple and unaffected in manner, trustworthy and faithful to their salt, when uncontaminated by the corrupting taint engendered amongst dwellers in cities. Both men and women are well formed, although carrying little spare flesh, and there is generally a great want of development below the knee and in the fore arm, while

the feet and hands are peculiarly small and delicately shaped. They have marked features, aquiline noses, and piercing black eyes capable of great expression. Some of both sexes are nearly black, but the majority have a complexion about the colour of a ripe filbert; although amongst the higher classes I have seen women and girls almost as fair as Europeans, they having never been exposed to the heat of the sun whilst tending sheep or fetching water. Like the sex throughout the world, the women are passionately fond of ornaments; and adorn themselves with a profusion of silver armlets, bracelets, necklaces of amber or beads, ear-rings, and small silver cases containing talismans, charms, or verses from the Koran. To heighten their beauty they tattoo their chins, each tribe having a peculiar mark, stain the nails of their hands and feet with henna, darken the eyelids, and pencil the eyebrows with antimony. The Towara women wear their hair drawn from the forehead in the shape of a horn; and the maidens, to distinguish them from wives, widows, &c., wear the *shebeka* fastened round the head, which is an ornament made of small shells, and corresponding with "the snood." This is forcibly taken away by the bridegroom on his nuptial night, and the bride can never resume it.

Marriage amongst the Bedouins is an institution which does not entail such "awful responsibilities" as if contracted at St. George's, Hanover Square. The form is simple, and certainly not expensive. Seven days after the negotiation is concluded, the bridegroom cuts the throat of a young camel or kid in front of the girl's father's tent, and the ceremony is completed.

During the day a feast is held by the friends of both parties; and a tent having been pitched a short distance away from the rest of the camp, towards evening the bridegroom retires to it. In the meantime the bride elect, after having had her hair dressed and her body perfumed, is carried by the women,

howling and yelling with fear, and delivered into the arms of the impatient husband, who tears off the *shebeka*, *et l'affaire est finie*.

“Wedlock's like a game of whist ;
A card is chosen from the pack ;
How much trouble might be miss'd,
If 'twere bad, to give it back !”

Such is matrimony in the desert, and if the Bedouin does not like his bride the contract is easily broken ; he mounts her on a female camel, says to her, “*Ent taleek*”—thou art divorced—and away she goes back to her family, when, after forty days, should she not prove to be in an interesting condition, she is free to marry again. On the second occasion, however, no great show of modesty is required to be displayed ; the tent of the bridegroom remains in its usual position, and the bride is supposed to find her way to it without offering any opposition.

Hard life, exposure to the weather, low diet without excess, and constant exercise, make the Bedouins extremely hardy, capable of great endurance, and able to perform the most arduous services on very meagre fare. Many a time have I seen them wrap themselves up in their burnouses and sleep out in the open, rather than take the trouble to unpack and pitch their tent ; and although heavy dew or rain might fall during the night, their constitutions rarely seemed to suffer by the exposure. The men may feed the horses and camels, but all the really hard work and domestic labour is done by the women.

They fetch the water, grind the corn, cook the food, tend the flocks, and when the labour of the day is over, shampoo and crack the joints of their lords and masters as they recline on the skin which serves as their bed. Such is the ordinary routine of nomade life ; but what else can be expected from a people who have no religion or law, no sense of honour, no antecedents, or aspirations, and no home or possessions but a few brackish wells and palm trees ? In the barren waste they

inhabit they know no real security, are ever, more or less, in danger, and are often exposed to the greatest privations and suffering, caused by drought and famine. Brought up without even a semblance of education and instruction, uninfluenced by the force of example, and unsoftened by the civilization of society, the life they lead very much resembles that of their own goats ; sometimes indeed one is struck by the extraordinary likeness to these animals that is to be found in an Arab's physiognomy. The valley of Feiran afforded capital grazing for our camels, and as we found ourselves well supplied with milk, honey, kids and other Bedouin delicacies supplied by the Sheikh, we passed a couple of days very pleasantly, and then retraced our steps to Gebel Mousa.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GAME OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

THERE is no country in the world where such a variety of the antelope species is to be found as in the district between the Limpopo and the Zambesi rivers, and the accompanying engravings show the trophies a hunter is likely to obtain in these parts. Vast herds of all kinds of antelope are to be met with in this district, which ravage the country over which they pass until scarcely a blade of grass is to be seen. During their periodical migrations, or "trek boken," as they are called by the colonists, thousands upon thousands of all kinds of animals may be seen pouring over the country like a great river, ever moving onwards. I shall now give a short description of the various species I have fallen in with in this region.

The SASSAYBE, or bastard hartebeeste (*Damalis lunatus*), is generally found in small herds in the neighbourhood of rivers. The adult male stands about 4ft. 6in. at the shoulder, 4ft. at the croup, and is 8ft. 6in. in extreme length. The general colour is a reddish-brown, with a very dark blaze down the face, and black points, the tail having a black tuft at the end. The horns are 12in. long, with ten or twelve incomplete rings, which, first turning outwards and then sweeping inwards and backwards, seem to form a complete crescent from the front. The female, which is a much smaller animal, has much more slender horns. The Bechuana and Matabili name is "sassaybe."

The KODOO (*Strepsiceros capensis*) is one of the most striking of the South African antelopes, on account of his magnifi-

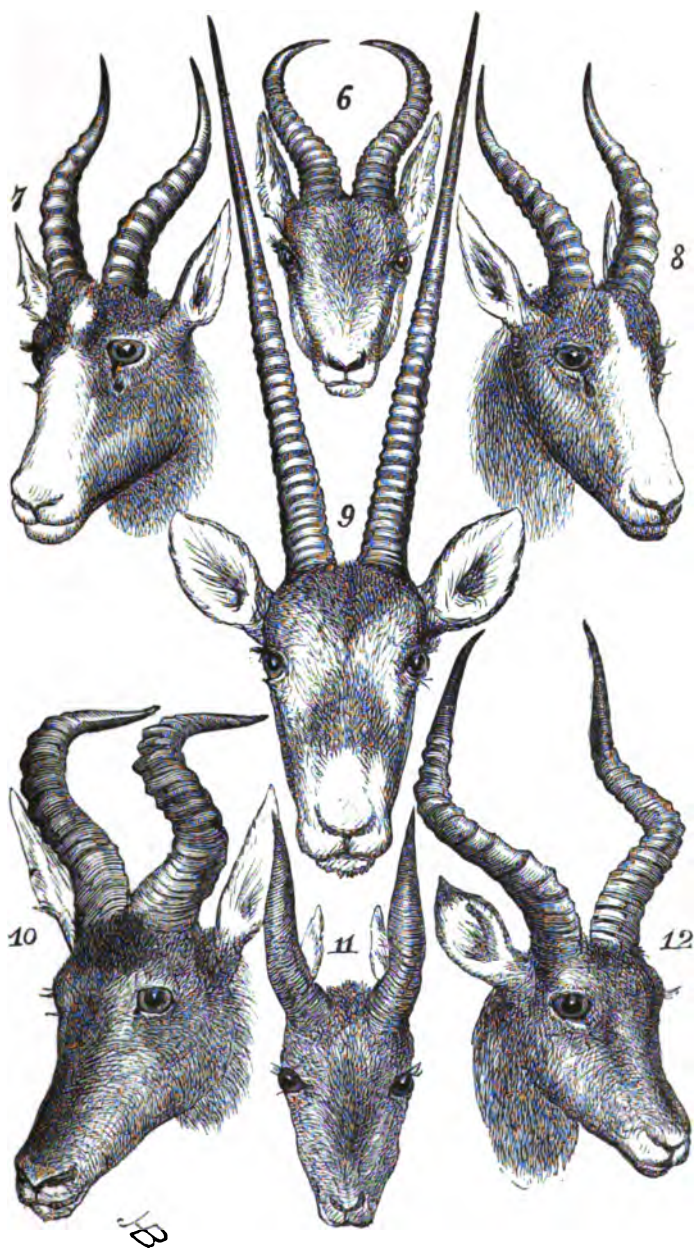


1. THE SASSAYBE.
2. THE KOODOO.
3. THE ELAND.

4. THE STEINDOK.
5. THE REEBOK.

cent antlers. The adult male stands 5ft. at the shoulder, and is about 9ft. in extreme length. The body is somewhat heavily made; consequently he can be run down without difficulty, provided he is fallen in with on good riding ground and that the hunters are well mounted. This, however, is a very rare incident, as koodoo frequent the thickets and wood on the banks of rivers, and I have never met with them in the open plain, unless they have been driven there by beaters or chased by wild animals. The head is short and well formed, with a somewhat square muzzle; and the ears are large and broad, but pointed at the tips. The horns are about 4ft. in extreme length forming two complete spiral circles, diverging from each other in their ascent, like a corkscrew. The base is marked for some distance with slight wrinkles, but not annulated. The female is hornless. General colour—a greyish blue, marked with a white line along the spine beneath a brown mane, which extends almost to the tail. The flanks are marked with several white stripes running downwards to the belly, which is white. The face is dark brown, with white under the horns and eyes; the beard is white; and the dewlap also white, fringed with black hair. The Matabili name is "Eechlongole."

The ELAND (*Boselaphus oreas*) is the largest of the South African antelope, being equal in dimensions to a fine ox. A full-grown bull will measure 6ft. 6in. at the shoulder and about 12ft. in extreme length; he is also proportionately ponderous in his build, and when fat and in good condition will weigh over 800lb. He has a very blood-looking head, light and long, with massive forehead, broad muzzle, small, pointed ears, and large, brilliant, melting eyes. The neck is light, the shoulders deep, the withers elevated, and he has an ample, pendulous dew lap, fringed with wavy brown hair. The horns, placed on the summit of the frontals, are about 2ft. in length, slightly divergent, nearly straight, and encircled by a spiral ring which



6. THE SPRINGBOK.
 7. THE BLESBOK.
 8. THE BONTÉBOK.
 9. THE GEMSBOCK.

10. THE HARTÉBEEST.
 11. THE BUSHBOK.
 12. THE PALLAS.

ascends almost to the tips. The general colour is a greyish brown, and he has no suborbital sinus or lachrymary depression. The cow is much smaller than the bull, and has long and slender horns. The flesh of the eland is the best that can be obtained in Africa; being juicy, well-flavoured, and tender. The Hottenot name for the eland is "T'ganna," the Kaffir "Impoof."

The STEINBOK (*Tragulus rupestris*) is generally found in pairs in most of the South African hill ranges. The adult male is 20in. high at the shoulder, 22in. at the croup, and 3ft. in extreme length, standing very high on the legs. The head is short and oval, the muzzle black and pointed, the ears large and open, and the tail barely an inch long. The horns are about 4in. in length; slender, round, and pointed, with several wrinkles round the base. The general colour is tawny ash, with white under the belly and inside the legs. The Matabili name is "Eeoolah."

The RHEEBOK (*Redunca capreolus*) is common amongst the hills and rocky ground in the neighbourhood of the Limpopo. The adult male stands about 2ft. 5in. at the shoulder, and is about 5ft. in extreme length. The horns are about 9in. in length, straight and sharply pointed, and annulated some distance from the base, with from ten to fifteen rings.

The SPRINGBOK (*Antelope euchores*) derives its name from the extraordinary bounds that it makes when alarmed; it being capable of leaping six or seven feet in height without any difficulty. When moving or grazing they walk or trot like any other antelope. Confident in their fleetness, it is very amusing to see the contemptuous way in which they treat their pursuers, as they allow them to come near, and then, giving a bound and a snort, expand the hair on their backs and change colour, appearing white. They are extremely graceful creatures, jumping beautifully, with the head thrown back, the legs

doubled quite under, and the body curved, so that they appear for the moment as if suspended in the air. Besides being one of the most beautiful of the South African antelopes, it is also by far the most numerous, being often seen in herds numbering many thousands. The adult male stands 2ft. 8in. at the shoulder, 2ft. 10in. at the croup, and measures about 4ft. 10in. in extreme length. The horns are about 15in. in length, lyrate, with the points turning inwards. They are annulated with about twenty rings. The general colour is a rich cinnamon brown, with pure white upon the abdomen; the two colours being separated from each other by a broad band of reddish brown. The doe is smaller than the buck, and has slender horns, with a few indistinct rings at the base. The Kaffir and Bechuana name is "Tsepe."

The BLESBOK, or white-faced antelope (*Gazella albifrons*), is not uncommon all over the Matabili district and south of the Vaal river. The adult male stands 3ft. 8in. at the shoulder and measures 6ft. 4in. in extreme length. The head is long and narrow, with broad muzzle. The horns are 15in. in length and semi-annulated on the anterior edge. The general colour—chocolate on the head and neck, bluish white on the back, chestnut along the sides and hind quarters, and white under the belly and inside the legs. It has all the appearance of being artificially painted. The Bechuana name is "Nunni."

The BONTBOK, pied antelope or painted goat (*Gazella pygarga*), is found in troops throughout the district between the Limpopo and the Zambesi. The adult male stands 3ft. 10in. at the shoulder, and measures 6ft. 6in. in extreme length. The head is ill-shaped, long, and narrow, with broad muzzle, and has always a white blaze down the face. The horns are 15in. long; thick round the base, lyrate, divergent, and erect; with ten or twelve incomplete rings broken in the middle and striated between. The female has slender horns, similar in

shape. The general colour is, chocolate on the side of the head and neck; black on the sides, flanks, and forearms; blueish lilac on the back and withers, with a white triangular patch on the croup; white belly, white stockings, and white inside the legs.

The GEMSBOK, or South African oryx (*Oryx capensis*), is one of the handsomest of the antelopes of Southern Africa. The adult male stands 3ft. 10in. at the shoulder, and measures about 10ft. in extreme length. The head is very game looking, with black between the base of the horns and down the forehead, and with two black stripes on each side of the jowl. The ears are also fringed with black. The horns are from 3ft. to 4ft. in length, slightly bent backwards and annulated half way up from the base with from 25 to 30 rings. The general colour is buff, with a black stripe along the back, widening over the croup and stretching down the forearms and hocks. Belly white, with black stripe running diagonally along the side. He has also a peculiar tuft of bristly black hair upon the larynx. The Matabili and Bechuana name is "Kookam."

The HARTEBEEST (*Acronotus caama*) is one of the clumsiest of all the African antelopes, and is not difficult to ride down. The adult male stands 5ft. at the withers, and measures about 9ft. in extreme length. The head is remarkably narrow, heavy and long; the shoulders are very high, and the croup droops considerably, so that the gait appears very awkward. The horns, 22in. in length and slightly annulated, are seated on the summit of a beetling ridge above the frontals, very close together, and forming a double angular curve, with the sharp tips pointing backwards. The general colour is a bright orange sienna, with a black stripe down the nose, and on each forearm and hock, reaching down to the fetlocks. The Matabili name is "Intoosel:" the Kaffir and Bechuana, "Cama."

The BUSHBOK (*Tragelaphus sylvatica*) is generally found in

the low bush near the coast. The adult male stands 2ft. 8in. at the shoulder, rather higher at the croup, and measures about 5ft. 2in. in extreme length. The head is somewhat like that of a goat, with the ears broad and rounded. The horns are 12in. long; erect, spiral, and sub-lyrate; being twisted about the middle and sharp-pointed. The female is hornless. General colour—brilliant chestnut, with black or very dark brown band round the neck; two white patches on each cheek and several on the flanks: the abdomen and inside the legs are white. They are generally found in pairs.

The PALLAH or Rooye-bok (*Epyceros melampus*) is found in the low bush of Bechuana land, and all over the district between the Limpopo and the Zambesi, in large herds. The adult male stands about 3ft. 4in. at the shoulder, and measures 6ft. in extreme length. The horns are about 20in. in length, lyrate in form, and annulated and striated for two thirds of their length; the rings being partially obliterated at the sides, with the tips smoothed and polished. There is no trace of a suborbital sinus. The female is a much smaller animal, and hornless. The general colour is bay, with a black crescent-shaped mark on the croup, forming a dark streak down each flank. They have also a peculiar cushion of black hair between the hock and the fetlock.

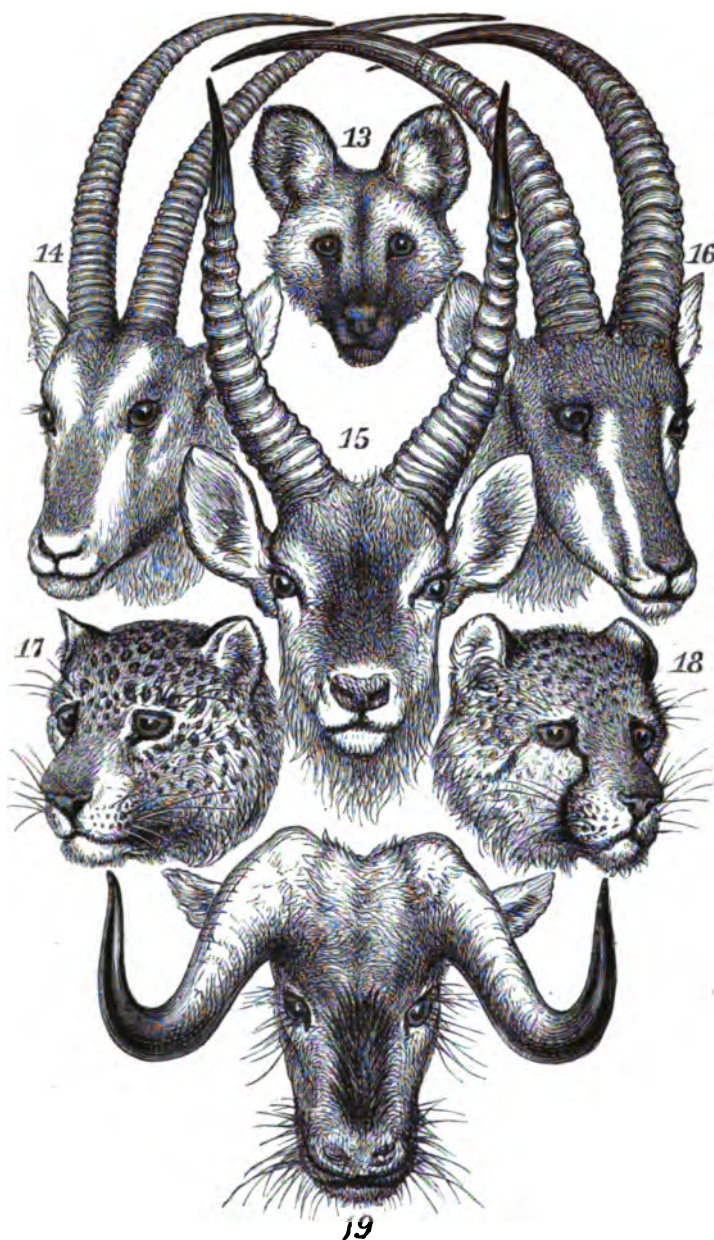
The ORYX (*Oryx leucoryx*) is found in herds of considerable numbers in the districts bordering on the Zambesi. It much resembles the gemsbok in general appearance, but the horns are very much more curved. An adult male stands about 3ft. 6in. at the shoulder, and measures in extreme length about 9ft. The horns are about 38in. in length, and slightly ringed or wrinkled two-thirds of the way up. The general colour is greyish white, diversified with dark brown patches on the face, back, and points.

The WATERBOK (*Kobus ellipsyprymnus*) is generally found

in pairs or families in the neighbourhood of rivers, into which when alarmed it will plunge without the slightest hesitation, regardless of the depth and strength of the current. An adult male stands about 4ft. 6in. at the withers, and measures in extreme length about 8ft. The horns are about 34in. in length, lyrate in form and wrinkled half-way up from the base. The female has no horns. The general colour is brown, with an elliptical patch of greyish white round the base of the tail.

The SABLE ANTELOPE (*Aigocerus niger*) is the most magnificent creature found in Southern Africa, and the hunter who has secured a specimen of a fine old male sable antelope may think himself lucky. The adult male stands 4ft. 6in. at the shoulder, and measures about 9ft. in extreme length. The head is remarkably game-looking, being attenuated towards the muzzle. The ears are long, tapering, and pointed, chestnut inside, and with black tips. The withers are elevated, and the croup low; therefore it is not very speedy, and can be run down with a good horse if found in fair riding-ground. The horns are about 40in. long, annulated with about thirty incomplete rings, and curved gracefully backwards, the tips being very sharply pointed. The general colour is intense glossy black, with an occasional cast of deep chestnut, and the male has a black mane. A white streak, commencing above each eye, runs down the side of the nose to the muzzle, and reaches along the jowl to the throat.

The GNU, or wildebeest (*Connochetes gorgon*), is an awkward, grotesque-looking animal, seeming a link between an antelope and a buffalo. There are several species of gnus in South Africa, known as the common gnu, the brindled gnu, and the blue wildebeest; and all are found in large herds in the Zambesi country. An adult gnu will stand over 4ft. at the withers, and measures in extreme length about 9ft. He has a heavy square head, not unlike a buffalo's, and spread-out muzzle,



13. THE DHOLE, OR WILD DOG.
 14. THE ORYX.
 15. THE WATERBOK.
 16. THE SABLE ANTELOPE.

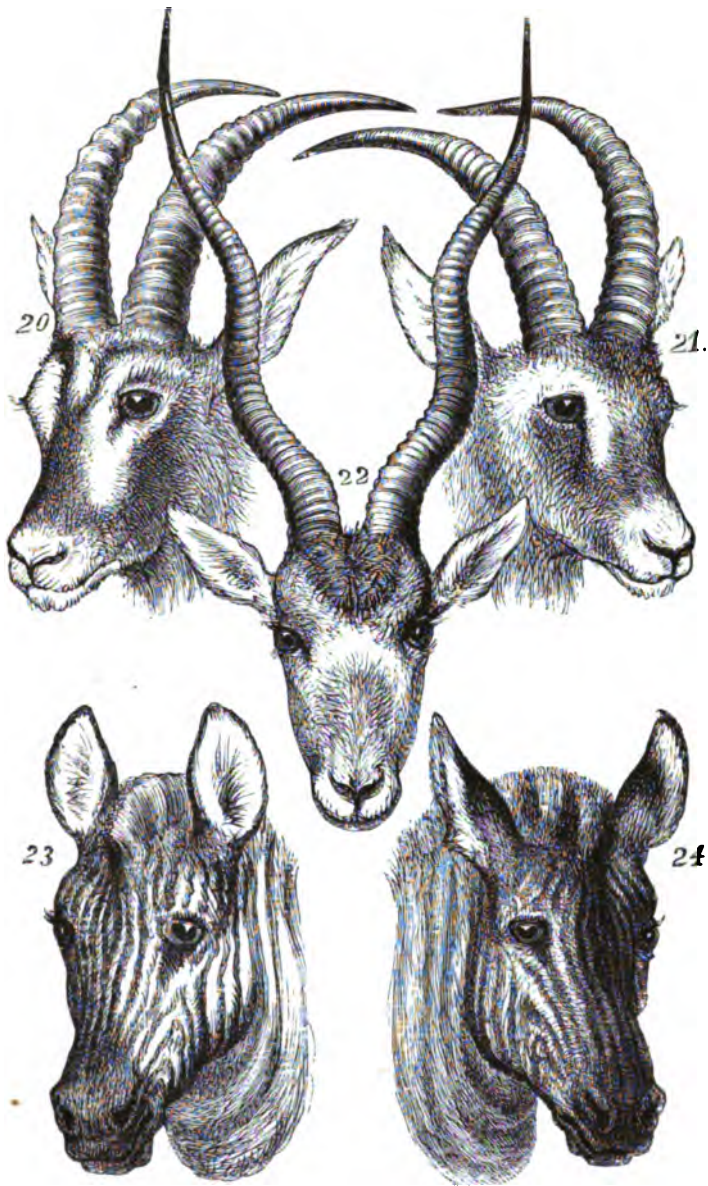
17. THE LEOPARD.
 18. THE CHEETAH.
 19. THE GNU.

small pointed ears, and a tuft of long black hair down the face. He has also a greyish wiry hog mane, a bushy black beard from the chin to the dew-lap, and long wavy hair from between the fore-legs to the brisket, extending for some distance along the belly. The horns, which are about 20in. in length, rise from a basal mass that extends over the forehead, and, sweeping downward over the eyes and beetling brows with a regular curve, rise upwards, tapering to a sharp point.

The ROAN ANTELOPE, or bastard gemsbok (*Aigocerus equina*), is common on the Zambesi. The adult male stands 5ft. at the shoulder, and measures 9ft. in extreme length. The head is shaped like that of an ibex, and the ears are 14in. in length, and pointed. The horns are about 2ft. in length, bend backwards, like those of an ibex, and are nearly parallel; with from twenty-five to thirty prominent rings, pretty close together at the base, but becoming more widely separated towards the points. The female has no horns. The Matabili name is "Etak."

The BLAUBOK, or etaac (*Aigocerus leucophaeus*), is found in troops of ten or twelve in the neighbourhood of the Limpopo and the Zambesi rivers. The adult male stands about 4ft. at the shoulder, and measures about 7ft. 6in. in extreme length. The horns are about 30in. in length; are annulated, and sweep backwards. The general colour is a bluish slate, and the mane and the tuft of the tail are black. The flesh is as rank as that of an ibex, and uneatable.

The ADDAX (*Addax nasomaculatus*) is found in pairs on the most arid plains of South Africa. An adult male stands 3ft. 6in. at the withers, rather higher at the croup, and measures about 7ft. in extreme length. The horns are about 30in. long, annulated and twisted somewhat like those of a koodoo, but the curves are not so great. The general colour is white, but the male has a black mane and a black patch of hair on the forehead. Both male and female have horns very much alike.



20. THE ROAN ANTELOPE.
 21. THE BLAUBOK.
 22. THE ADDAX.

23. THE ZEBRA.
 24. THE QUAGGA.

The ZEBRA, or wilde paard (*Asinus zebra*), is one of the most beautiful of all the South African animals. The general colour is a creamy white, marked regularly with velvety black stripes that cover the entire head, neck, and body. The zebra stands about 4ft. 6in. at the withers, and measures 8ft. 6in. from the nose to the point of the tail. He has a short glossy coat, clean muscular limbs, arched crest, and black muzzle. They are found in great numbers all over the interior of South Africa, and more especially in the country between the Limpopo and the Zambesi.

The QUAGGA (*Asinus quagga*) looks at first sight like a cross between the zebra and the ass. He stands about 4ft. 6in. at the withers, and measures 8ft. 6in. in extreme length. His general colour is dark fulvous brown brindled, with darker brown stripes on the neck, belly, and legs. He has a high crest, full hog mane, ears like a horse, and flowing white tail. These animals are found in great herds on the Vaal river, living peaceably and sociably with antelopes of all species.

The WILD DOG, or DHOLE, of South Africa (*Cuon dukhuensis*) is commonly found in packs of about twenty, and the ravages they make amongst the game is something incredible; no animal, however swift, being safe from attack, as they systematically hunt their prey down by relays. They rarely stand more than 2ft. at the shoulder, and measure 4ft. 3in. in extreme length. Their general colour is brindled or sandy yellow, with black head and muzzle, and they are marked with black and white irregularly-shaped stripes on the body. The tail is bushy, like that of a fox, and divided in the middle by a black band; the upper part being sandy and the end white.

Amongst the trophies are the heads of the leopard (*Felis leopardus*) and the cheetah (*Felis jubata*) which have been described in the first volume.



THE ADDAX.

CHAPTER V.

A TREK-BOKKEN ; OR, PERIODICAL MIGRATION OF GAME IN CENTRAL AFRICA.

IT would be difficult for those who have never visited the interior of Africa to imagine or even form a remote conception of the countless herds of different kinds of antelope that are occasionally to be met with on her vast plains. Lack of water, the curse and the prevailing feature of these savage regions, frequently compels the *feræ naturæ* to assemble in countless companies round the last dregs of expiring moisture, without reference to caste or hereditary animosities ; and on such an occasion the picture they represent is one that must be seen to be believed.

At a single *coup-d'œil* may be seen mixed multitudes of the graceful spring-bok, the brindled gnu, the red and yellow harte-beeste, the purple sassaybe, the peach-bloom coloured gems-bok, the roan antelope, the corkscrew-horned koodoo, the white-faced bles-bok, the many-striped zebra, the agile quagga, intermingled with troops of unwieldy eland, flocks of ostriches, and countless varieties of smaller animals—

“ Rolling and blackening, swarms succeeding swarms,
With deeper murmurs and more hoarse alarms,
Dusky they spread, in close embodied crowds,
And o'er the vales descend in living clouds.”

The eloquent word-painting of the greatest sportsman of this century, Sir William Harris, will convey to the reader a very fair idea of the vast quantity of game that is to be met with in these regions :—

"It was on the banks of the Meritsane, south of the twenty-sixth parallel of latitude, that we first witnessed one of these grand and imposing spectacles. Countless herds, which had congregated from every quarter to drink of the stagnant waters of that river, literally covered the wide extended landscape for many miles, nor could the numbers assembled have fallen short of fifteen or twenty thousand. 'You should have seen this ground ten years ago,' is the observation which usually grates on the ear of the disappointed sportsman who visits some boasted hunting grounds in India, only to find it tenantless; and so little game had been seen by our party previous to reaching this river, that we were strongly tempted to treat the accounts that had been given of its abundance as altogether fabulous. With this noble panorama, however, we opened our campaign against the African fauna. A host of famished savages scoured in our wake, dexterously despatching the wounded animals as they fell, by a touch on the spine with the point of an assegai; hastily covering up the carcasses with thorn branches, to secure them from the voracity of the impatient vultures, which swooped in myriads, and, seeming utterly heedless of the presence of man, plucked out the eyes of the yet living victims. Never, perhaps, has there been witnessed such an onslaught, since the days

'when Nimrod bold,
That mighty hunter, first made war on beasts,
And stained the woodland green with purple dye.'

"Troop upon troop now pour in from every quarter, and continue to join each other, until the whole plain seems literally alive; and thousands still bearing down from every point of the compass, a vast extent of country, which presently becomes chequered white and black with their congregated masses, at length presents the appearance of a moving mass of game. The clatter of their hoofs becomes perfectly astounding, and can

be compared to nothing but the din of a tremendous charge of cavalry, or the rushing of a mighty tempest. Their incredible numbers so impede their onward progress, that the horseman experiences no difficulty in closing with the motley band. As the panic caused by the repeated reports of his rifle increases, the rear ranks, pressing tumultuously upon the heels of the leaders of the retreating phalanx, cause indescribable confusion. Dense clouds of dust hover over them, and the long necks of troops of ostriches are to be seen towering above the heads of their less gigantic neighbours, and sailing past with great rapidity; whilst a host of hungry vultures, which, wheeling in airy circlets like small specks in the firmament, have been gradually descending, and now swoop with the velocity of lightning as each succeeding flash of the deadly tube gives token of prey, serve to complete a picture which must be seen to be understood, and which beggars all attempt at description."

The *Trek-bokken*, as the colonists are wont to term the immense migratory swarms of different kinds of antelope which from time to time inundate the abodes of civilization to the destruction of every green herb or sign of crops, not only form one of the most remarkable features in the zoology of Central Africa, but may also be reckoned amongst the most extraordinary examples of the fecundity of animal life.

The spring-bok, which is unquestionably one of the most graceful and symmetrical of the antelope species, may be found in countless herds on the broad plains of the interior. It abounds at times to such an incredible extent that the whole face of the country, as far as the eye can sweep, is absolutely white with its congregated multitudes. As the traveller advances over the trackless expanse, hundreds of this delicately formed antelope bound away on either side of his path with meteor-like and sportive velocity; winging their bird-like flight by a quick succession of those singularly elastic leaps, which

have given rise to its colonial appellation, and which enable it to surpass as well in swiftness as in grace almost every other mammiferous quadruped. But although frequently found herding by itself, the spring-bok is more usually detected in the society of gnus, quaggas, ostriches, or bles-boks. Fleet as the wind and thoroughly conscious of its own speed, it mingles with these motley herds, sauntering about with an easy careless gait, occasionally with outstretched neck approaching some coquettish doe, and spreading its own glittering white folds so as to effect a sudden and complete metamorphosis of exterior from fawn colour to white. Wariest of the wary, however, the spring-boks are ever the first to take the alarm and to lead the retreating column.

Harris thus describes a *trek-bokken*: "To form any estimate of their numbers on such occasions would be perfectly impossible. The havoc committed in their onward progress falling nothing short of a wasting swarm of locusts. Pouring down like the devastating curse of Egypt from their native plains in the interior, whence they have been driven, after protracted drought, by the failure of the stagnant pools on which they have relied; whole legions of spring-boks, abandoning the parched soil, throng with one accord to deluge and lay waste the cultivated regions, and so effectually does the van of the vast column destroy every vestige of verdure, that the rear is often reduced to positive starvation. The lion has then been seen stalking in the middle of the compressed phalanx, removed little more than a paw's length from his powerless victims, whilst flocks of sheep have not unfrequently been swept away by the living torrent, and no more seen. Ere the morning's dawn, cultivated fields, which the evening before appeared proud of their promising verdure, despite of every precaution that can be taken, are reaped level with the ground, and the grazier, despoiled of his lands, is driven to seek pasture for his flocks elsewhere, until the bountiful thunder-clouds, reanimating nature, restore vege-

tation to the burnt-up country. Then these unwelcome visitors, whose ranks, during their short but destructive sojourn, have been thinned both by man and beast, retire instinctively to their secluded abodes, to renew their depredations when necessity shall again compel them."

This account, which is in no way exaggerated or overdrawn, is more than corroborated by the testimony of Gordon Cumming, Oswell, Livingstone, and a host of other African travellers. Gordon Cumming gives the following graphic description of one of these periodical migrations of game during a severe drought: "On the 28th I had the satisfaction of beholding, for the first time, what I have often heard the Boers speak of, viz., a 'trek-bokken,' or grand migration of spring-boks. This was, I think, the most extraordinary and striking scene, as connected with beasts of the chase, I ever beheld. For about two hours before dawn I had been lying awake in my waggon listening to the grunting of the bucks within 200 yards of me, imagining that some large herd of spring-boks was feeding beside my camp; but rising when it was light, and looking about me, I beheld the ground to the northward of my camp actually covered with a dense living mass of spring-boks, marching slowly and steadily along; they extended from an opening in a long range of hills on the west, through which they continued pouring, like the flood of some great river, to a ridge about a mile to the north-east, over which they disappeared: the breadth of ground they covered might have been somewhere about half-a-mile. I stood on the fore-chest of my waggon for nearly two hours, lost in astonishment at the novel and wonderful scene before me, and had some difficulty in convincing myself that it was a reality which I beheld, and not the wild and exaggerated picture of a hunter's dream. During this time these vast legions continued streaming through the neck in the hills in one unbroken compact phalanx. At length I saddled up, and,

riding into the middle of them with my rifle and after-riders, fired into their ranks until fourteen had fallen, when I cried 'Enough.' We then retraced our steps to secure from the ever-voracious vultures the venison which lay strewed along my track: having collected the spring-boks at different bushes, and concealed them with brushwood, we returned to camp."

In certain parts of the interior of Africa, game of every description is still to be found, unlimited in quantity; but the wholesale introduction of fire-arms of late years has made every man more or less a hunter, consequently, the sportsman who would kill elephant, rhinoceros, the great *carnivora*, or make a collection of the numerous kinds of antelope, must now go far away from the general European trading settlements, and, having provided himself with a suitable equipment and following, strike into the interior from the seaboard. African hunting is an excellent remedy against *ennui*, and the man who has done Europe may still find ample excitement in stalking through tropical forests abounding with large game, or in riding over magnificent plains teeming with countless antelope of different kinds. Elephants, rhinoceros, and lions, are still plentiful, at no great distance inland, for those who are fond of hazardous sport and midnight excitement; and, as a famous African sportsman in the Artillery wrote, "It is a great comfort to be in a barbarous land where you shake hands with every man you meet (not often troubled by-the-bye), and can ask this man, black or white, to do you a favour, and meet kindness from him, and probably receive an invitation to shoot or dine with him. It is better than residing in civilised countries, where your most intimate friend will only know you near corners, because perhaps you don't wear peg-top breeches or Noah's-ark coats. I am no grumbler, but I do like to see the sun 300 days out of the 365—I am fond of green trees, green fields, and even green men. I like to have room to move my elbows, without digging them

into somebody else's ribs, and I like to be able to open my mouth and shout, and have no hearers, instead of having an army jump down one's throat, if one merely opens one's lips."

A man who has passed through an African shooting campaign will find that his health is improved; that he is better able to help himself, has a greater trust in his natural gifts, and that trifles cease to annoy him. He will return to England without having lost much of his taste for his native sports. He will enter fully into a five-and-thirty minutes' run across country, at a pace that weeds the mob, or will take his quiet station near the rippling trout-stream, with just the same gusto as before his African tour. "The plains of Southern Africa are the true fairy land of sport."



THE GORILLA.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LION AND ITS VARIETIES.

THOSE who have only seen the King of Beasts immured in a cage, after years of harassing and emaciating captivity, and half paralysed by confinement and want of exercise, can form no conception of his majestic appearance as he bounds along in his own native wilds conscious of his own strength and prowess. There he is indeed a monarch, for, dreaded by all, he has nothing to fear from any living creature, save when by chance some solitary hunter, aided by his death-dealing arms, wages unequal war against him. I have lived in his domains for months and months together, and have encountered him at all times, and under all circumstances; and the more I have studied his character and his habits, when in a state of nature, the more am I convinced of his right to royal precedence amongst beasts.

His strength is unsurpassed by any animal in creation, not even excepting the tiger, for I have known him to break the spine of an ox with a single blow of his tremendous fore-paw; I have seen him stop a horse in its full career, and throw him back on his haunches; I have witnessed the skull of a living man crushed to pieces as if it were an egg-shell, by a lion already in its death-throes; and at night I have heard a marauder leap over the wall of a cattle-kraal, seven feet high, taking with him a bullock, which he carried off as easily as a cat would do a mouse. Add to this terrible strength, the fearful gripe of his flesh-rending fangs; his peculiar faculty of being able to see in the dark; the noiselessness with which he is

enabled to approach, and the distance from which he can spring upon his prey ; and it must be confessed that in the darker hours of night a hunter, however experienced and well-armed he may be, stands but a poor chance against such a formidable antagonist. In the daylight the chances of the contest are all in favour of the man ; the lion's superior powers of attack vanish ; his faculties become deadened ; his self-possession at times leaves him, and his gigantic strength is of no avail against the deadly grooved bore of the hunter.

Lions are essentially nocturnal animals, as during the day they seek some cool and shady spot, and sleep until the approach of night, when they sally forth in search of prey. In the hot season, they seldom turn out of their lair between sun-rise and sunset, unless disturbed or driven out by the swarms of flies and stinging insects that infest their haunts, when they move about in a state of semi-somnolence, and look like fish out of water. But in wilds where they are not subject to man's intrusion, during the rains, and in cool or cloudy weather, they may frequently be seen wandering listlessly over the plains during the day-time.

Sir William Harris, in his admirable account of the wild sports of South Africa, says, "Scarcely a day passed without our seeing two or three lions ; but, like the rest of the animal creation, they uniformly retreated when disturbed by the approach of men. However troublesome we found the intrusions of the feline race during the night, they seldom at any time showed the least disposition to molest us unless we commenced hostilities ; and this, owing to the badness of our horses, we rarely felt disposed to do."

A lion in the day and a lion at night are two distinctly different animals. During the daylight, a lion—unless severely pressed by hunger, or provoked by hostilities—never shows any disposition to molest man ; on the contrary, he almost invariably

beats a precipitate retreat when he discovers his presence. If the *rencontre* takes place in cover, he will steal quietly away ; but if it occurs in the open, and he knows that his movements are observed, he will stand a moment or two exhibiting a certain apparently fearless nonchalance, and then move slowly away at a stately walk, as if afraid of compromising his dignity. When he has placed a certain distance between himself and the intruder into his domains, he quickens his movements, and, if he sees that he is not followed, breaks into a trot, until he thinks he is out of sight ; then all restraint is thrown off, and he bounds away at speed.

The lion, unlike all the rest of the feline *carnivora*, never kills for the mere pleasure of killing, but only for food, or to resent attack. Thus a lion—when his belly is full—may very often be seen in close proximity with herds of quagga, antelope, and zebra, without attempting to molest them. At such a time, *i.e.*, in broad day-light, if a Hottentot woman even shakes her apron at him, he will make himself scarce, for he hates intrusion ; but he is no poltroon, notwithstanding, and those who know him best, and have encountered him at all hours in his own domain, have a very high opinion of his courage, majestic coolness, and unconquerable spirit, which have very justly earned him the title of the king of beasts.

Although it appears to be a pretty general opinion amongst naturalists that there is only one species of lion, my own experience leads me to believe that this theory is erroneous, and that the Asiatic and the African lions are of two distinct species ; whilst the former may be again divided into two varieties, and the latter into three. Of course, the general appearance, size, and even to a certain extent the colour of any variety of lion, depend in a great degree upon the animal's age, and the development of his physical powers ; which vary according to the habits and the nature of the locality in which he is

found. I have seen lions in India, Asiatic Turkey, Syria, and Persia, and have every reason to believe that they all belong to the same genus ; which, however, is as decidedly inferior to the African species in size, weight, and physical power as a pony is to a horse.

The lion may be said to be indigenous to Africa, having been found in all parts of that continent, except in the mangrove swamp districts of the West Coast, and along a belt some 5 or 6 degrees on each side of the Equator. Fever arising from malaria kills lions as it does men, and as a rule lions are never found in a swampy country.

I have killed three varieties of lions between the Limpopo and Zambesi rivers ; and in that district the Boers, Colonists, Kaffirs, and Bushmen, who are all quite familiar with the peculiar differences both in appearance and habits of each variety, are accustomed to distinguish them as the "yellow-maned," the black-maned," and the "grey lion."

My own experience leads me to believe that the yellow-maned lion, shown in the engraving, is the largest, heaviest, and most powerful variety. It is also the most common in the districts inhabited by man ; and is more disposed to subsist upon domestic cattle than either the black-maned or the grey lion, who may be said to live chiefly by the chase of wild animals. He also generally inhabits the same district for years together, living alone with his family, whilst the other varieties, although not gregarious, are often found hunting in troops, following the periodical migrations of antelope over a great extent of country. When found away from the haunts of man, he generally lies in wait for his prey near water, or surprises herds of antelope by night, when his noiseless step, and his faculty of seeing in the dark, give him great advantages.

The black-maned lion is generally found in the neighbourhood of forests, and rarely in the plains. He is somewhat



THE AFRICAN YELLOW-MANED LION.

smaller than the yellow-maned variety, and much shorter in the back and more compactly built than the grey lion. Although he lives upon the same species of wild animals as the grey lion, he hunts in a very different manner, as instead of depending upon his speed and endurance, he generally stalks his game, and springs upon his prey from under cover or from an ambuscade, depending more upon his subtle cunning than his speed.

The grey lion, or, as he is sometimes called, the sand-lion, is often met with in troops upon the vast undulating plains that are to be found in different parts of Central Africa; on various occasions I have seen companies of about a dozen adult males and females hunting together, and displaying wonderful instinctive sagacity in circumventing, and hunting by relays, herds of different kinds of antelope.

The grey lion has but little perceptible mane, a sleek coat of long texture, and is longer in the body, and more lithe than either of the other varieties; as he depends upon his speed and bottom in hunting his prey, and is generally in good training, a hunter must have a right good horse in fair racing condition to ride him to a stand-still. In Central Africa, from insufficiency of wholesome grain, and the want of the requisite nutrition in the herbage, it is very hard to keep a horse in fair condition; consequently the comparatively few grey lions I have killed were met with in chance *rencontres*, when gorged, or stalked in undulating ground, at a time when their attention was attracted by visions of venison.

I have killed all three varieties at various ages, from whelp-hood to decrepitude, yet their specially distinctive marks and attributes were always discernible. I have met with both the black and the yellow-maned lion on the western confines of Tunis, and the grey lion in the desert south of the Atlas range in Morocco; and amongst the spoils of King Theodore's strong-

hold at Magdala, I found specimens of both the black and the yellow-maned varieties, that were said to have been killed in the Galla country. I have seen skins both of the yellow-maned and the grey lion at Bathurst that had been brought from the country lying between the Senegal and the Gambia; and when at Lagos, amongst the presents forwarded by one of the independent Hausa chiefs of Zeg-zeg, was a magnificent black lion's skin, whose owner was said to have been killed in the Hausa territory adjacent to Lake Van. No lions are to be found in the fever-haunted districts of the West Coast of Africa, comprising the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Monrovia, the Gold Coast, Lagos, the embouchures of the Niger, the Gaboon, the Congo district, or Loando; although in the interior, to the southward of Little Fish Bay, they are said to be numerous. Jules Gérard, who is a great authority on this subject, describes all three varieties as being found in Algeria and Northern Africa, and he informs us that the Arabs distinguish them as "*El asfar*," the fawn-coloured lion, "*El adria*," the black lion, and "*El zarzouri*," the grey lion, and that they also assign to each variety different traits of character and habits of living, —and the late Lieutenant Henry Faulkner of the 16th Lancers, who shot over the same ground, corroborates their opinion. This distinguished sportsman, who accompanied Mr. Young in the Livingstone Search Expedition, and was afterwards treacherously murdered by a native tribe in the Lake districts of Central Africa, informed me that he had seen all three varieties in East Africa.

The Asiatic lion, according to Layard, has also two varieties, for he tells us that on the river Karoom he had seen lions with long black manes, which by the inhabitants were designated "*Sons of Islam*," whilst the common maneless lions are now denounced as "*Kafirs*" or infidels. They pretend that a true believer may induce the former to spare his life, upon his

pronouncing the profession of faith, whilst the unbelieving lion is inexorable.

The roar of the African lion impresses one with awe when heard in the night time, and the Arabs have only one word to express his voice and thunder, which is "*Rad.*" It must not be imagined, when speaking of the roar of the lion, that it is in any way to be compared with the low hollow sighing noise, ending with a gruff grunt, that is commonly heard in the Zoological Gardens. The roar of the animal in its wild state is a sound, once heard, never to be forgotten; for there is something strangely terrifying and appalling in the sound. Gordon Cumming thus describes it:—"One of the most striking things connected with the lion is his voice, which is extremely grand and peculiarly striking. It consists at times of a low deep moaning, repeated five or six times in quick succession, each increasing in loudness to the third or fourth, when his voice dies away in five or six low muffled sounds, very much resembling distant thunder. At times, and not unfrequently, a troop may be heard roaring in concert, one assuming the lead, and two, three, or four regularly taking up their parts, like persons singing a catch. Like our Scottish stags in the rutting season, they roar loudest on cold frosty nights; but on no occasions are their voices to be heard in such perfection or so intensely powerful as when two or three troops of strange lions approach a fountain to drink at the same time. When this occurs, every member of each troop sounds a bold roar of defiance at the opposite parties; and when one roars, all roar together, and each seems to vie with his comrades in the intensity and power of his voice." The power and grandeur of these nocturnal concerts are inconceivably striking and pleasing to the hunter's ear; and the effect is equally enhanced when the hearer happens to be situated in the depths of the forest, at the dead hour of midnight, unaccompanied by any attendant, and ensconced within

twenty yards of the fountain which the surrounding troop of lions are approaching. Jules Gérard, who had many opportunities of studying the roar of a lion, thus describes it: "It is composed of a dozen sounds, commencing with sighs which rise in volume as they proceed, and finish as they began with an interval between each." When a lion and a lioness are in



LIONS ROARING.

company, the lioness is always the first to roar, and this at the moment of leaving the lair. The lion alternates with the lioness, and in this manner they proceed on their way, roaring every quarter of an hour until they have approached the Douar, or village, which they propose despoiling; and when their appetites are satisfied they often again recommence roaring, and continue until daylight. In the hot weather the lion scarcely ever roars. General Dumas informs us that when the lion roars the Arabs pretend that they can distinguish the following words:—

"*Ahna ou ben el mora*;" that is to say, "I am the son of the woman." Moreover, that he repeats twice *ben el mora*, but *Ahna* only once, from which they conclude that he does not recognise any other creature than man besides himself. One of our earliest writers on Africa says, "When the lion speaketh, his breath maketh the big trees to quake, and the smaller animals infesting his domain to gape with fear."

In former days there were men who professed to understand the songs of birds; and often whilst watching for game, as I have listened to the merry songsters of the wood, or to the exquisitely plaintive melody of the turtle dove as he wooed his bride, I have thought that it was quite possible to learn much of their language by watching their actions and paying attention to the manifold accents of their notes—now soft, low, and long drawn out, now shrill, disjointed, and harsh. These studies of nature are the hunter's recreations, and he feels a proportionate pleasure as he understands them. After a long sojourn in the solitudes of the forest, no sound escapes his keen ear, and he gets accustomed to observe the minutest change, tracing the cause by the effect; thus he gains fresh insight into the nature, character, and habits of animals by marking their cries under different circumstances; cries which express their various desires and emotions, as all have certain calls, and utter peculiar sounds denoting pleasure, sorrow, maternal affection, connubial attachment, anger, rage, alarm, and fear. Those who have lived for any length of time in a region infested with these grand *carnivora* can readily distinguish the temper and condition they are in, by listening to the various peculiar and distinctly different sounds and noises they make. Thus there is no mistaking the suppressed sighing cry which the male lion always makes whilst following the lioness, or her sharper note, which somewhat resembles the subdued whinny of a mare. Again, it is not difficult for those initiated in "forest lore" to distinguish the long-continued

rumbling growl of a hungry lion, from the expressive grunts of satisfaction emitted by one whose appetite is satiated; and some of the tribes of Bushmen can even tell, from the different degrees of hoarseness in the roar of the lion, whether he has lately eaten, or is still fasting and on the look-out for prey. Moffat, one of the most practical teachers of humanity of all the many missionaries whom I have met with in Africa, thus describes the skill of the natives in detecting the condition of a lion by his varying moaning noises. He says, "one of those beasts passed near us, occasionally giving a roar, which softly died away on the extended plain, and it was responded to by another at a distance. Directing the attention of these Balala, and asking if they thought there was danger, they turned their ears as to a voice with which they were familiar, and, after listening for a moment or two, replied, 'there is no danger, he has eaten and is going to sleep!' They were right, and we slept also. Asking them, in the morning, how they knew the lions were going to sleep; they replied:—'We live with them, they are our companions.'"

Although my own experience leads me to believe that Nature has implanted in all wild animals an instinctive fear of man, I have also seen notable exceptions to the rule, not only in man-eaters of the feline race and "Rogue" elephants, but on several occasions I have had my right of way disputed by the black rhinoceros, bears, buffalo, and boars. In nine cases out of ten the fiercest of forest creatures will flee on man's approach; even the taint of his presence borne on the wind, or the betraying odour of his footsteps in their path being sufficient to scare them; but I once came across a lion who not only would not acknowledge the supremacy of "a lord of the creation," but who held his own, without flinching, to the very death. The circumstances of the case were these: I was hunting in the Berere bush when the settlement of Natal was in its infancy,

and consisted of only a few huts and shanties, as shown in the plate, in company with Captain Stevenson, an old friend who had given up the service to turn settler, when we came across the trail of a herd of springbok. This we followed to the banks of a small river, fringed with high reeds, some twenty yards in width, which we crossed, the water scarcely coming to our saddle girths. When we arrived at the other side, we perceived from the slots that the herd had scattered over the plain, as if suddenly alarmed; and on closer investigation we found the pugs of two full-grown lions and a pair of half-grown cubs, which fully accounted for the panic that had taken place. It was evident that these animals had been lurking in a Nimosa-grove, by the side of the river, and lying in wait for their prey as they came to drink; and from the freshness of the pugs I felt sure that they could not be far off, so I followed their spoor for about a mile over the plain (which was hard, firm, and good riding ground), until I came to a low cone-shaped hill, which I ascended, to get a better survey of the surrounding country. I was sweeping the horizon with my field-glass, which was not of much use on account of a mirage that obstructed the view, and made all distant objects look dim, when "Kleine," a Hottentot boy, tapping me on the shoulder, pointed out a flock of vultures that were circling in the air at some short distance, saying, "Dar ist der verdamt tau!" (There is the cursed lion!) I turned my glass to the spot, without distinguishing anything; but on cantering ahead, I soon had the gratification of seeing a full-grown lion and lioness, with two half-grown cubs, feasting on the remains of two spring-bucks.

I looked to my nipples, to see that the powder was well up, and rode towards them; but my horse did not at all like the sport, and fear made him almost unmanageable; so finding that I should have had no chance of firing from the saddle with any degree of precision, I had to return to Stevenson, who, with the

rest of our people, had pulled up, on observing the lion, which, being game, none of them seemed inclined to attack; for although my friend was a fearless hunter, he had been suffering from an inflammation and weakness of the eyes, caused by the excessive glare of the sun reflected from the sand, and his sight was so much affected that he could no longer depend upon his aim as in days of yore. I therefore dismounted, and prepared to open the campaign on my own hook—trusting to a steady hand and good weapons to see me safely through it. On my retreat, on account of the restiveness of my horse, the lion had advanced nearly two hundred yards from the spot where the dead springbucks lay, leaving the lioness and cub still feeding; and he was now coolly surveying our party, stretched out at full length on the grass, with his paws spread out before him, and yawning listlessly, about four hundred yards distant. On perceiving me advancing towards him, he made a long, low moaning noise, like thunder rumbling among distant hills, by which he thought perhaps to intimidate me; but finding it had not the desired effect, he got up and sat on his haunches like a dog, making curious whining noises, and turning his head every now and again to look at his mate and cubs, who, understanding from his growling, which was becoming more and more savage, that something was up, withdrew to some low sand-hills, a short distance away; which I was rather thankful for, as it reduced the odds against me and made the chances more even. When I got to about two hundred and fifty yards distant, I stopped to unsling my second gun from my shoulder, so as to be ready; on which my friend sprung to his feet, and made three or four huge bounds towards me, lashing his tail from side to side, showing his teeth, and giving a tremendous roar, which seemed to shake the earth, and caused the horse I had been riding to break from the grasp of the Hottentot who was holding it, and scour over the plain. On seeing me advance, he again stopped, and, couching low on

his belly, growled in a most savage manner. I felt that "the die was cast," and that there was no retreating; it was a regular duel between man and beast, and was beginning to be rather serious work, for we were barely sixty yards asunder. The lion still lay with his head couched between his paws, although every now and then he appeared to rise, and tear up the earth with his hind claws. His eyeballs glistened with rage, his mane stood erect, his tail lashed his flanks, and I felt he was watching my every movement, and that further delay was dangerous. I therefore quietly cocked my second gun, laid it by my side on the ground, and then gave a loud shout, at the same time flinging my pith hunting-cup towards him. This had the desired effect; he sprung upon his feet, and at this moment looked grand beyond conception. Now was the moment. I threw up my rifle; took deliberate aim at his broad and massive breast, and let fly. I heard the soft "thud" of the ball as it entered his chest, saw him spring high into the air, and fall upon his back. I rushed up to give him a *coup de grâce*, but it was not needed; a convulsive tremor passed over his sturdy limbs, blood gushed from his nose and mouth, the under-jaw dropped, and my first African lion was dead. He was a noble animal, measuring over eleven feet from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail. The lioness and cubs, on hearing the shot, made for a small copse about a mile distant; and as it was late in the day I did not follow them up. This was the bravest animal of the feline race I ever met, such undaunted pluck being rarely exhibited in any forest creature.

CHAPTER VII.

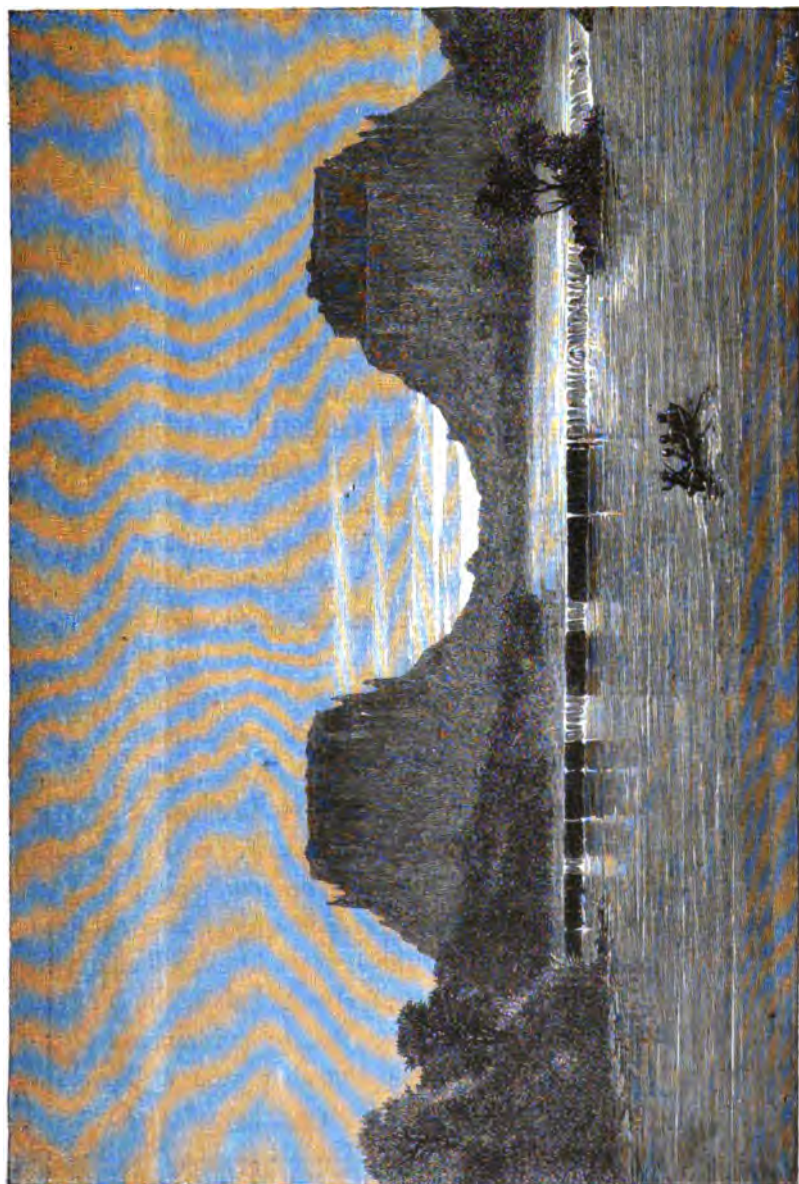
THE AFRICAN RIVERS, AND THE ANIMALS FOUND IN THEIR VICINITY.

THE immense continent of Africa, although abounding with the most striking and surprising contrasts, presents on a general view a monotonous uniformity, as from one coast to the other dreary arid wastes of almost boundless extent are spread over its surface. The sun, which cheers and illumines the rest of the earth, glares upon Africa with such fatally oppressive influence that it blasts the whole face of nature, and spreads desolation over the land, for the soil, when not watered by copious rains, or the over-flowing of rivers, is scorched and dried up till it is turned into a dreary waste. Thus those vast plains of sand we call the Great Desert extend across the entire continent except where intersected by the valley of the Nile. In this waste the traveller may march for days without finding water, or seeing any vestige of animal life. He pursues his dreary course amid loose hills incessantly shifting, and having no marks to guide his course. Every breeze is loaded with dust, which enters the mouth and nostrils, penetrating even the clothes and the pores of the skin; while sometimes the sand is driven along in clouds by whirlwinds, sweeping away all before it. Such is the general aspect of all regions between the tropics directly beneath the solar influence, when not plentifully watered, as the soil moulders into sand and causes these desolate tracks to resemble the dry bed of an ancient ocean. In order to mitigate the desolating effects of the tropical sun,

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Nature has provided that every district under this latitude has its periodical rainy season, when the ground is covered as with a deluge, and great rivers, swollen by the floods, lay the low lands under water, and cause that luxuriant growth of vegetation which is only to be seen in equatorial regions. There are also mountain-chains and table-lands that give rise to several rivers of great magnitude, which fertilise large tracts of country; but except in these irrigated districts, and upon certain elevated plateaux, vegetable life, in consequence of the absence of moisture, is very scantily diffused over a great extent of Central Africa.

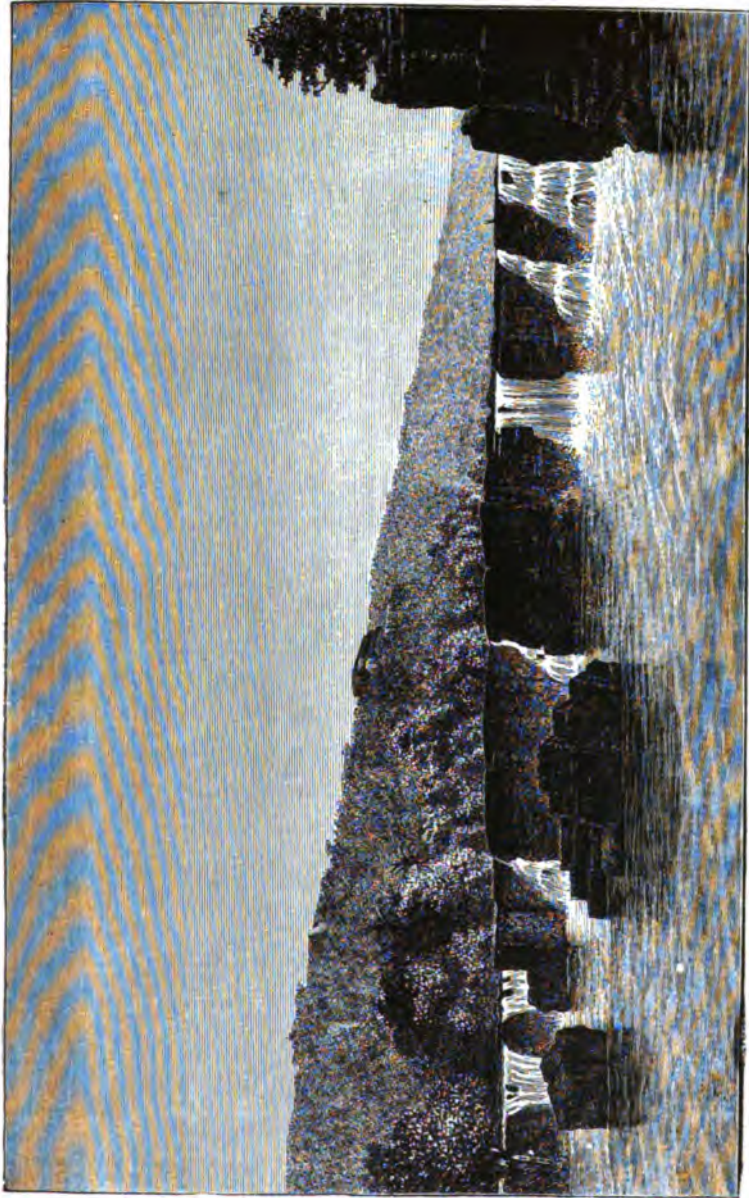
Besides the great difficulty of travelling by land over arid wastes, which supply neither food for man nor forage for cattle, pestilential belts of mangrove swamp, reeking with noxious exhalations, and immense tracts of impregnable forest, form an almost unsurpassable barrier to the formation of any extensive intercourse with the interior. It is only by the navigable rivers, therefore, that an expedition can penetrate any distance into the far interior. Unfortunately, all the large rivers have shifting bars and lines of breakers at the embouchures that impede navigation, and only permit shallow-draught vessels to ascend; besides which in many of them are impetuous currents, that only powerful steamers can stem, and impracticable rapids and falls. In the illustrations—which are taken from drawings made on the spot by M. Mage, Lieutenant de Vaisseau of the French Navy—are represented the Makagnian and Gouina Falls, which obstruct the navigation of the Senegal. That enterprising officer, accompanied by Dr. Quintin and ten native followers, ascended the Senegal from Saint-Louis, at the embouchure, until he arrived at the Bambouk country on the Upper Senegal, a distance of over 800 miles from the coast; then he started across country, and after a fatiguing march of nearly three months' duration struck the Upper Niger at



THE MAKONIAN FALLS ON THE SENEGAL.

Yamina, which town is represented in the illustrations. There the party were detained on various pretensions by King Ahmadon, who, although he treated them kindly, would not let them return for nearly two years, when they reached Saint-Louis in safety, after an absence of nearly three years. M. Mage gave a very graphic description of the country through which he passed, which entirely substantiates Mungo Park's account, who went over a good deal of the same ground.

In most of the large and broad rivers of the African continent still exempt from white man's intrusion, and in the immense forests that overshadow them, are found three species of amphibious animals of ungainly shape and uncouth proportions. These are the buffalo, the hippopotamus, and the crocodile, all of which are alike able to stalk on land, march along the bottom of the waters, or swim on their surface. The African buffalo (*Bos Caffer*) has broad, massive, curved, sharp-pointed horns, that cover the entire forehead with the exception of a small triangular space, the apex of which is directed upwards between their bases. They are huge ponderous animals measuring about 9 feet in length, exclusive of the tail, which is 3 feet long, and terminates in a large tuft of coarse black hair. They often exceed 50 stone in weight when in good condition, but their flesh is coarse and tough. They are generally found in families of about twenty, although in certain seasons several families will herd together, and as many as a couple of hundred have been seen at a time. During the heat of the day the African buffaloes, like the Indian variety, frequent pools or bends in the river, where the current is not very strong; and immerse themselves until only their heads appear above the surface, thus freeing themselves from the stinging flies that otherwise would allow them no respite. If water is unobtainable, they roll in the mud until a crust impervious to stinging insects is formed over their body, when after exposure to the sun's rays they look



THE GOUINA FALLS ON THE SENEGAL.

like hideous clay images such as are represented in Hindoo temples.

The buffalo has been reported by some writers to be a timid inoffensive animal ; but my own experience has proved them to be quite the reverse, and I think a wounded bull buffalo is one of the most cunning, malignant, and revengeful brutes in creation, as the following incident will show. I was on a hunting expedition with Captain Stevenson and a Dutch colonist named Van Jansen in the Notoanis district, and a party were following up an old elephant trail that led through thick bush, down a rather steep incline, when all at once I perceived a herd of about a dozen buffalo making their way up the same track we were going down. As a string of natives carrying our baggage was following us in Indian file, I shouted so as to try and scare them, and make them break back, and both Stevenson and Van Jansen joined me ; but our shouts produced no effect, and they continued to ascend the slope in a most defiant manner, a sturdy old bull leading. Passing the word to our carrier in the rear "to look out for squalls," and take refuge behind trees, Stevenson, Van Jansen, and I prepared for offensive operations, for the elephant track was not much more than 4 feet wide, and the bush on either side was almost impenetrable from dense undergrowth and wait-a-bit thorns. Van Jansen fired first from his roah, which carried a three-ounce ball, and struck the leading bull clean between the eyes, bringing him down to his knees ; but in an instant he sprang again to his feet, and shaking his head in a threatening manner continued his course up the hill in our direction. Stevenson now let drive, and his first shot went crashing through the bull's nose and entered the chest, rolling him over ; whilst with his second barrel he severely wounded a second bull, that, after plunging heavily about a few moments, tore his way through the bush, where we heard him fall. In spite of the discomfiture of the two



A CHARGE OF AFRICAN BUFFALO.

leaders, the remainder of the herd did not seem inclined to yield the right of way; and I brought down two more of their number with my heavy 8-gauge rifle, which carried the largest-size Jacob's shells, before they thought of beating a retreat. The first shell, which I fired at less than 60 yards' range, burst in the chest of a malignant-looking old cow, who was pawing up the ground with her feet and making hostile demonstrations, and finished her career; whilst the second just escaped the horns of a young bull, and entered the nape of the neck, where it exploded, and shattered the vertebra, causing immediate death. Having cleared the way, we advanced, and were examining the horns and massive proportions of the big bull first shot at, when shouts and yells were heard in our rear, and all our carriers came rushing down the hill in a body, without their loads, having been charged by the bull wounded by Stevenson. We immediately made our way back again up the track, which was somewhat encumbered by our baggage, and at a little bend in the path came across the still quivering body of one of Van Jansen's best servants, who had been gored in two places through the body; one horn having entered the side just above the hip and ripped open the abdomen; whilst the other had entered just under the right arm-pit and pierced the lungs. A little further on lay one of our Zulu goat-boys, surrounded by five or six of his charge, insensible, and with his left arm and two ribs broken; and just beyond was the carcass of the pony that carried the water-skins, literally pounded into an almost undistinguishable heap, the intestines being scattered along the track for a dozen yards or more. I could see by the trail that, after having killed the pony, the buffalo had again re-entered the bush; so having looked to our arms, we followed him up, and after creeping through the undergrowth by the track he had made for about a couple of hundred yards, I caught sight of him lying down, with his back and hind



THE HAUNT OF BEHEMOTH.

quarters turned towards us. He was evidently very sick, as I could see by his horns that he was resting his head and neck on the ground; so having cocked my rifle and made ready, I gave a shrill whistle, which caused him to raise his head and turn his nose in our direction, when I gave him a shell just behind the ear, which, exploding in the brain, caused instantaneous death. Stevenson's cylindro-conical bullet had pierced his shoulder-blade and entered the lungs; but his extraordinary vitality and tenacity of life were such that, although mortally wounded, he could commit such damage whilst almost in his death-throes. Having collected our people together with some difficulty, we buried the Zulu, and carried the wounded boy in a litter; but he never recovered his consciousness, and died in a few hours, having doubtlessly received some severe internal injury. In the evening I heard the whole account of the disastrous affair from some of the carriers who had witnessed it; and it appears that the buffalo, after having been wounded by Stevenson, had entered the jungle, and ascended the hill some distance; when, probably attracted by the sound of the horse's hoofs, it came crashing into the track down which the carriers were coming, and, first venting its revenge on the man, afterwards attacked the horse, merely knocking down the boy *en passant* by a sweep of his horns. After this affair I was always very careful how I meddled with a herd of buffalo, and always took care I had a good line of retreat before I commenced any hostile demonstrations.

"Behemoth" is another awkward customer to tackle when in his native element; and naturalists who represent the hippopotamus as of a mild and inoffensive disposition cannot have had much practical experience of his habits, when in a wild state, as on several occasions I have seen him wantonly attack boats and canoes. Some of the African tribes, who are fearless hunters, harpoon these ferocious-looking animals and

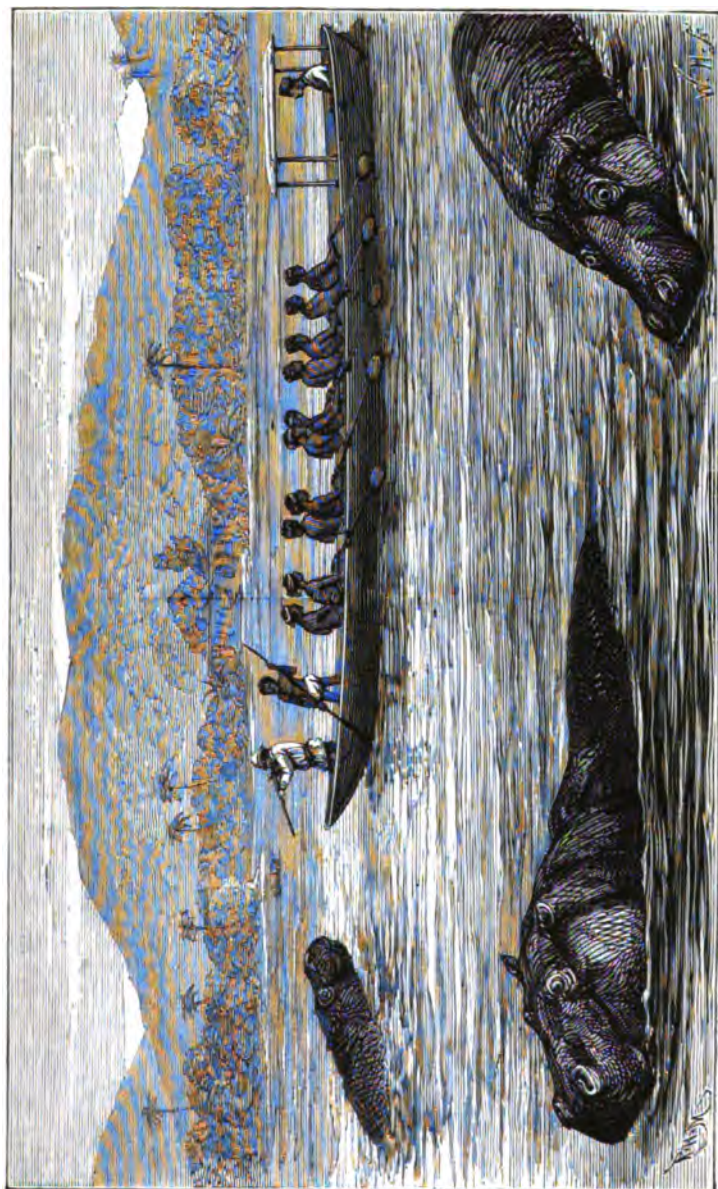


NATIVE HUNTERS SPEARING HIPPOPOTAMUS.

kill them with javelins, as shown in the engravings; but in these affairs fatal accidents often happen, which in a country where life is held so cheaply is not of much account.

The Rev. Mr. Moffat relates an instance of a hippopotamus having seized a boy and literally severed his body in two with its monstrous jaws; and Sir Samuel Baker, in his last work, "Ismailia," cites an extraordinary instance of the unprovoked ferocity of a hippopotamus of the White Nile. Sometimes, indeed, Sir Samuel did not give the hippopotami time to show their ferocity; I give his own words:—

"About half an hour before sunset I observed the head of a hippopotamus emerge from the bank of high grass that fringed the lake. My troops had no meat—thus I would not lose the opportunity of procuring, if possible, a supply of hippopotamus beef. I took a No. 8 breechloader, and started in the little dingy belonging to the *diahbeeah*. Having paddled quietly along the edge of the grass for a couple of hundred yards, I arrived near the spot from which the hippopotamus had emerged. It is the general habit of the hippopotami in these marsh districts to lie on the high grass swamps during the day, and to swim and amuse themselves in the open water at sunset. I had not waited long before I heard a snort, and I perceived the hippopotamus had risen to the surface about fifty yards from me. This distance was a little too great for the accurate firing necessary to reach the brain, especially when the shot must be taken from a boat, in which there is always some movement. I therefore allowed the animal to disappear, after which I immediately ordered the boat forward, to remain exactly over the spot where he had sunk. A few minutes elapsed, when the great, ugly head of the hippopotamus appeared about thirty paces from the boat, and, having blown the water from his nostrils and snorted loudly, he turned round and seemed astonished to find the solitary little boat so near



HIPPOPOTAMUS SHOOTING.

him. Telling the two boatmen to sit perfectly quiet, so as to allow a good sight, I aimed just below the eye, and fired a heavy shell, which contained a bursting charge of three drachms of fine-grained powder. The head disappeared. A little smoke hung over the water, and I could not observe other effects. The lake was deep, and after vainly sounding for the body with a boat hook I returned to the *diabbeeah* just as it became dark. The next morning the body of the hippopotamus was discovered floating near us, therefore all hands turned out to cut him up, delighted at the idea of fresh meat. There was about an acre of high and dry ground that bordered the marsh on one spot, and to this the carcass of the hippopotamus was towed. I was anxious to observe the effects of the explosive shell, as it was an invention of my own. This shell was composed of iron covered with lead. The interior was a cast-iron bottle (similar in shape to a stoneware seltzer-water bottle); the neck formed a nipple to receive a percussion cap. The entire bottle was concealed by a leaden coating, which was cast in a mould to fit a No. 8 or two-ounce rifle. The iron bottle contained three drachms of the strongest gunpowder, and a simple cap pressed down upon the nipple prepared the shell for service.

"On an examination of the head of the hippopotamus, I found that the shell had struck exactly beneath the eye, where the bone plate is thin. It had traversed the skull, and had apparently exploded in the brain, as it had entirely carried away the massive bone that formed the back of the skull. The velocity of the projectile had carried the fragments of the shell onwards after the explosion, and had formed a sort of tunnel, which was blackened with burnt powder for a considerable distance along the flesh of the neck. I was quite satisfied with my explosive shell."

Sir Samuel thus recounts the rather strange instance of

aggression on the part of an hippopotamus I have already referred to :—

“The night was cold, and the moon clear and bright. Everyone was wrapped up in warm blankets, and I was so sound asleep that I cannot describe more until I was suddenly awoken by a tremendous splashing quite close to the *diabbeeah*, accompanied by the hoarse wild snorting of a furious hippopotamus. I jumped up, and immediately perceived a hippo, which was apparently about to attack the vessel. The main deck being crowded with people sleeping beneath their thick mosquito curtains, attached to the stairs of the poop deck and to the rigging in all directions, rendered it impossible to descend. I at once tore away some of the lines, and awakened the sleepy people. My servant, Suleiman, was sleeping next to the cabin door. I called to him for a rifle. Before the affrighted Suleiman could bring the rifle, the hippopotamus dashed at us with indescribable fury. With one blow he capsized and sunk the zinc boat with its cargo of flesh. In another instant he seized the dingy in his immense jaws, and the crash of splintered wood betokened the complete destruction of my favourite boat. By this time Suleiman appeared from the cabin with an unloaded gun in his hand and without ammunition. This was a very good man, but he was never overburdened with presence of mind ; he was shaking so fearfully from nervousness that his senses had entirely abandoned him. All the people were shouting and endeavouring to scare the hippo, which attacked us without ceasing, with a blind fury that I have never witnessed in any animal except a bull-dog.

“By the time I had procured a rifle from the cabin, where they were always kept fixed in a row, loaded, and ready for action, with bags of breechloading ammunition on the same shelf, the movements of the animal were so rapid as he charged and plunged alternately beneath the water in a cloud of foam

and wave, that it was impossible to aim correctly at the small but fatal spot upon the head. The moon was extremely bright, and presently as he charged straight at the *diahbeeah*, I stopped him with a No. 8 (or two-ounce) shell. To my surprise he again recovered and again commenced the attack. I fired shot after shot at him without apparent effect. The *diahbeeah* rocked about upon the waves raised by the efforts of so large an animal; this movement rendered the aim uncertain. At length, apparently badly wounded, he retired to the high grass; there he lay by the bank snorting and blowing.

"I could not distinguish him, as merely the head was above water, and this was concealed by the deep shadow thrown by the high grass. Thinking that he would die, I went to bed; but before this I took the precaution to arrange a white paper sight upon the muzzle of my rifle, without which night shooting is very uncertain.

"We had fallen asleep; but in about half an hour we were awoke by another tremendous splash, and once more the mad beast came charging directly at us as though unhurt. In another instant he was at the *diahbeeah*; but I met him with a ball at the top of the head which sent him rolling over and over, sometimes on his back, kicking with his four legs above the surface, and again producing waves that rocked the *diahbeeah*. In this helpless manner he rolled for about fifty yards down the stream, and we all thought him killed.

"To our amazement he recovered, and we heard him splashing as he moved slowly along the river through the high grass by the left bank. There he remained snorting and blowing, and as the light of the moon was of no service in the dark shadows of the high grass, we waited for a considerable time, and then went to bed with the rifle placed in readiness on deck. In a short time I heard loud splashing. I again got up, and I perceived him about eighty yards distant, walking slowly across

the river in the shallows. Having a fair shot at the shoulder, I fired right and left with the No. 8 rifle, and I distinctly heard the bullets strike. He nevertheless reached the right bank, when he presently turned round and attempted to recross the shallow. This gave me a good chance at the shoulder, as his body was entirely exposed. He staggered forward at the shot, and fell dead in the shallow flat of the river. He was now past recovery. It was very cold, the thermometer was 54° Fahrenheit, and the blankets were very agreeable, as once more all hands turned in to sleep.

"On the following morning I made a *post-mortem* examination. He had received three shots in the flank and shoulder; four on the head, one of which had broken his lower jaw; another had passed through his nose, and, passing downward, had cut off one of his large tusks. I never witnessed such determined and unprovoked fury as was exhibited by this animal—he appeared to be raving mad. His body was a mass of frightful scars, the result of continual conflicts with bulls of his own species; some of these wounds were still unhealed. There was one scar about two feet in length, and about two inches below the level of the surface skin upon the flank. He was evidently a character of the worst description, but whose madness rendered him callous to all punishment. I can only suppose that the attack upon the vessels was induced by the smell of the raw hippopotamus flesh, which was hung in long strips about the rigging, and with which the zinc boat was filled. A dead hippopotamus that was floating astern lashed to the *diahbeeah* had not been disturbed. We raised the zinc boat, which was fortunately unhurt. The dingy had lost a mouthful, as the hippopotamus had bitten out a portion of the side, including the gunwale of hard wood; he had munched out a piece like the port of a small vessel, which he had accomplished with the same ease as though it had been a slice of toast."

Formidable as is the hippopotamus when his wrath is raised, he does not commit half the depredations of the crocodile, who lies like a log upon the water watching for his prey, and is the most dreaded of all the inhabitants of the African rivers. Thousands of lives are lost annually by the depredations of these ferocious animals, yet the natives scarcely make any attempts to extirpate them, or prevent their increase, and in some places they may be seen in hundreds together.

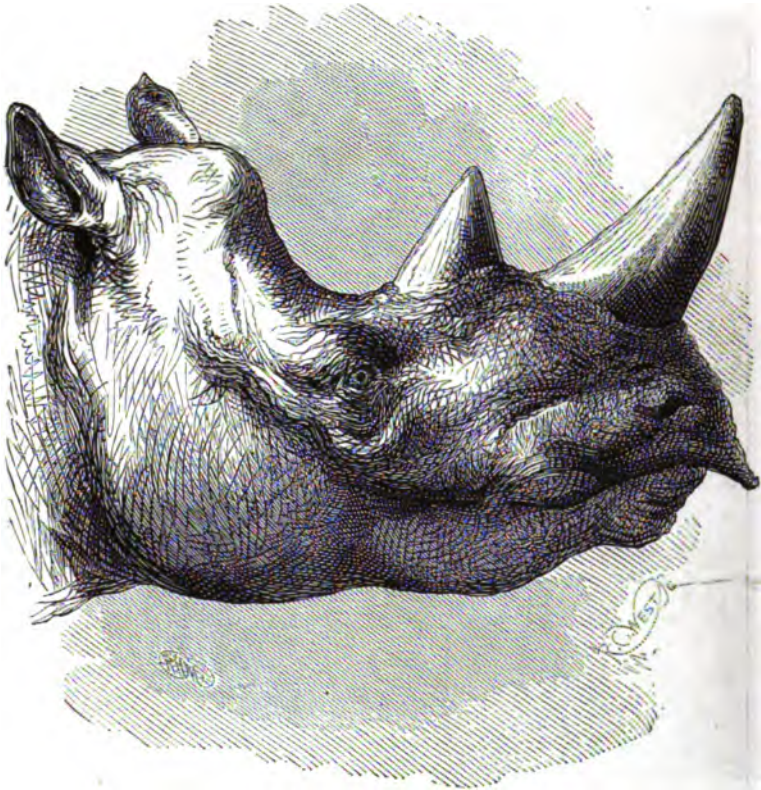
Livingstone in his last journal thus describes an exciting hippopotamus hunt :—

“At the Loangwa of Zumbo we came to a party of hereditary hippopotamus hunters called Makombwé or Akombwe. They follow no other occupation, but when their game is getting scanty at one spot they remove to some other part of the Loangwa, Zambesi, Shiré, and build temporary huts on an island, where their women cultivate patches; the flesh of the animals they kill is easily exchanged by the more settled people for grain, they are not stingy, and are everywhere welcome guests. I never heard of any fraud in dealing, or that they had been guilty of an outrage on the poorest; their chief characteristic is their courage. Their hunting is the bravest thing I ever saw. Each canoe is manned by two men; they are long light crafts, scarcely half an inch in thickness, about eighteen inches beam, and from eighteen to twenty feet long; they are formed for speed, and shaped something like our racing boats. Each man uses a broad short paddle, and as they guide the canoe slowly down-stream to a sleeping hippopotamus, not a single ripple is raised on the smooth water; they look as if holding their breath, and communicate by signs only. As they come near the prey the harpooner in the bow lays down his paddle and rises slowly up; and there he stands erect, motionless, and eager, with the long-handled weapon poised at arm's length above his head, till coming close to the beast he plunges it with



HAULING A HIPPOPOTAMUS ASHORE.

all his might in towards the heart. During this exciting feat he has to keep his balance exactly. His neighbour in the stern at once backs his paddle, the harpooner sits still, seizes his paddle, and backs too to escape: the animal surprised and



THE MOCHOCHO, OR COMMON WHITE RHINOCEROS.

wounded seldom returns the attack at this stage of the hunt. The next stage, however, is full of danger. The barbed blade of the harpoon is secured by a long and very strong rope wound round the handle: it is intended to come out of its socket, and while the iron head is firmly fixed in the animal's body, the rope unwinds and the handle floats on the surface. The hunter next



THE TABLES TURNED.

goes to the handle and hauls on the rope till he knows that he is right over the beast ; when he feels the line suddenly slacken he is prepared to deliver another harpoon the instant the hippo's enormous jaws appear, with a terrible grunt, above the



THE KEITLOA, OR TWO-HORNED BLACK RHINOCEROS.

water. The backing by the paddles is again repeated ; but hippo often assaults the canoe, crunches it with his great jaws as easily as a pig would a bunch of asparagus, or shivers it by a kick with his hind foot. Deprived of their canoe, the gallant comrades instantly dive and swim to the shore under water ; they say that the infuriated beast looks for them on the surface, and



JUST IN TIME.

being below they escape his sight. When caught by many harpoons, the crews of several canoes seize the handles and drag him hither and thither, till weakened by loss of blood he



THE BORÈLE, OR ONE-HORNED BLACK RHINOCEROS.

succumbs. The danger may be appreciated if one remembers that no sooner is blood shed in the water than all the crocodiles below are immediately drawn up-stream by the scent, and are ready to act the part of thieves in a London crowd or worse.

Next to the elephant, the rhinoceros certainly takes precedence as the largest of forest creatures; but whilst the former is



THE COUP DE GRÂCE.

one of the most peaceable animals in existence, the black varieties of the latter are without exception the most morose and mischievously inclined. There are four distinct species known to exist in Africa, two of which, the *borèlè* and the *keitloa*, are black, whilst the *mochochó* and *kobaoba* are white, or rather of a colour more approaching that than any other. The *mochochó*, or common two-horned square-nosed white rhinoceros, is the largest of the family, as it often exceeds eighteen feet in length; next to it in size is the *kobaoba*, or long-horned white rhinoceros, which is frequently seen with a main horn exceeding four feet in length, whilst that of the *mochochó* seldom exceeds two. The posterior horn in both species is seldom longer than eight inches. The white species are harmless, and will rarely attack man or beast except when provoked or wounded. The flesh is succulent and of fair flavour, and as this animal yields about two or three thousand pounds of meat, it is much sought after both by the colonists and the native tribes. The *keitloa*, or two-horned black rhinoceros, is smaller than either of the white varieties, but somewhat larger than the *borèlè*. Its horns are much longer than those of any other species, the posterior horn sometimes attaining a length exceeding five feet six inches; whilst in the *borèlè* the posterior horn is much shorter than the anterior one, which rarely exceeds two feet in length.

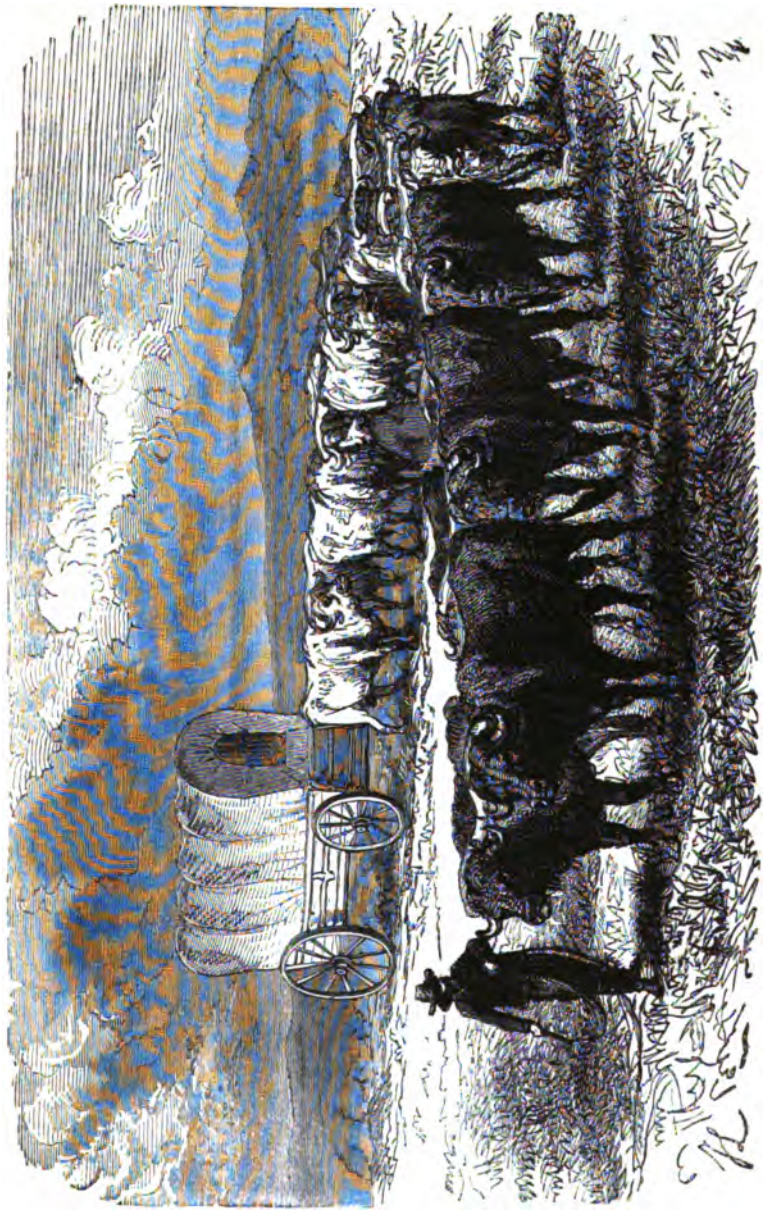
The white rhinoceros are flat-lipped and habitual *grazers*; whilst the black species have the upper lip prehensile, and are habitual *browsers*: the two differ much both in habits and disposition, the former being innocent eaters of grass that live in peace with all other animals; whilst the latter feed on young shoots, branches, and roots, which they dig up with their fore horns, and are the most quarrelsome and spiteful brutes imaginable, attacking indiscriminately man and beast. As a rule, most of the denizens of the forest will shun and avoid man's presence, doing

their best to escape a *rencontre* ; but the black rhinoceros is an exception, for as soon as he sniffs the taint in the air denoting an intrusion in his domain, he snorts a defiant challenge, tosses his head up-wind, and, sweeping right and left with his huge horns, charges in the direction he imagines his enemy to be, and commences the attack without the slightest provocation. Should the lion and the keitloa meet, the former allows the latter a wide berth ; and the elephant generally yields the path to him rather than encounter such a formidable antagonist ; although sometimes he is attacked by his quarrelsome adversary before he is aware of his presence, and then a terrific battle ensues, when the elephant, if he is a tusker, generally gets the best of it, although I have seen a whole herd of elephants put to flight by two black rhinoceros.

Every African traveller who has been much in the bush has some strange story to tell of his *rencontres* with this general disturber of the peace, and the following incident is one of many instances in which this aggressive and malevolent animal has taken the initiative in the attack.

The engravings illustrate a trader's narrative of a rhinoceros hunt in Amatonga land, which is best given in his own words as told round the watch-fire after a good day's buffalo hunting. "Buffaloes are dangerous at times, very dangerous, and most big game may be made to fight ; but for a thorough-going *skellum* (villain), commend me to a *bichan* (black rhinoceros), who, when you wish to hunt him, it is more likely will hunt you. I remember once I and a mixed breed after-rider, part Kaffir and part Hottentot, whom I often took with me on my trips, contrived to get a couple of bullets into a black rhinoceros, one of a pair which we came suddenly upon whilst riding through a bush path. Our quarry did not hesitate a moment to retaliate, but came down at a furious pace upon my people, who did not seem to know where to run. Charging

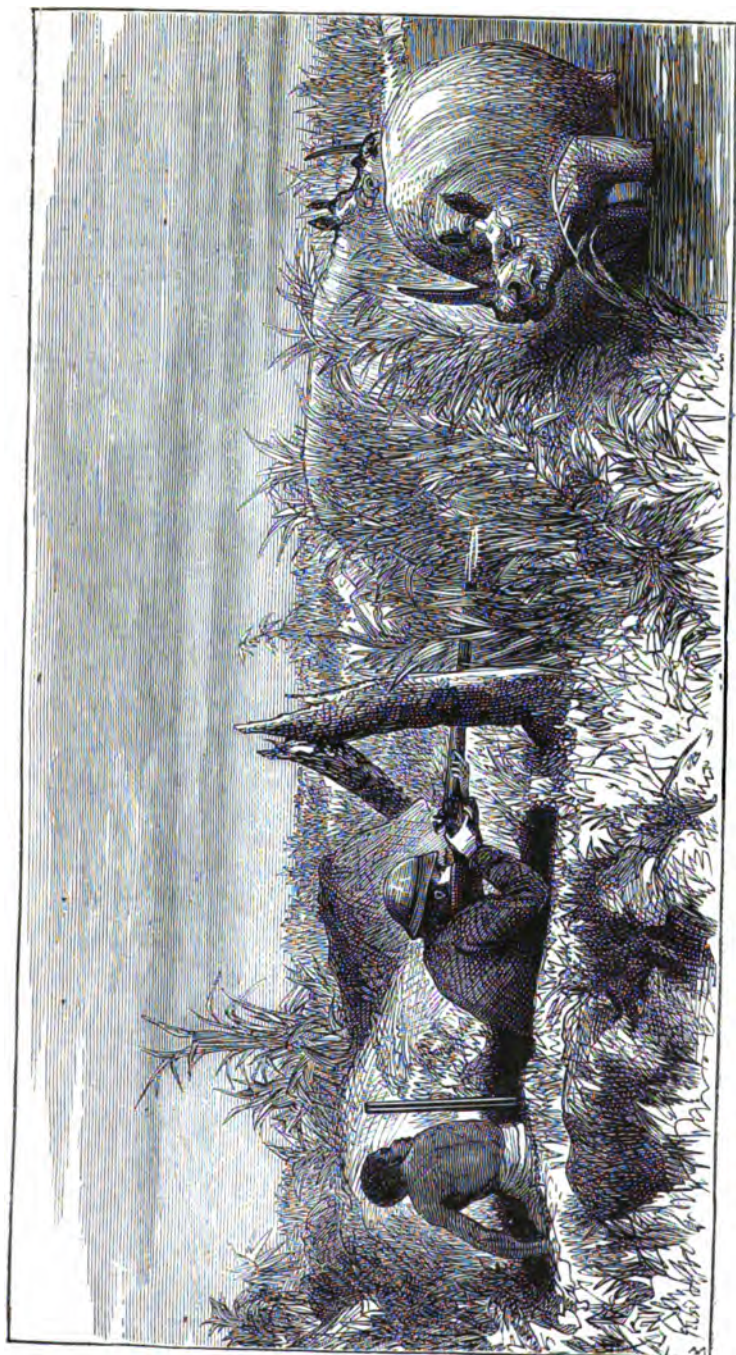
among the discomfited carriers, they leapt over the nearest, who had presence of mind sufficient to throw himself flat upon the ground, and came blundering along, apparently undecided as to which they should attack first; when my horse, generally steady and reliable, gave a loud snort, and, leaping into the air, went plunging through the rough thorny bush. Jan, my after-rider, galloped off down the bush-path, but I well knew that he would keep with us, and be ready in time of need. If I had had the advantage of open ground, I felt sure that my horse could easily have distanced the rhinoceros, but we were among tangle and timber, and upon rough broken ground, and, worse than all, my horse was frightened, and a horse is never so useless as when he is frightened. Well, after a short time—what with ducking and dodging to avoid the trunks of trees and overhanging boughs, and my efforts to guide my horse so as to keep a-head of the game, who followed grunting and groaning in my tracks, hunting me as much as a blood-hound hunts a fox—I was beginning to feel uneasy, and anxious to bring matters to a crisis. The blood was flowing, I could see, from two bullet-holes in the old bull; but as the wounds were not near a vital part, I knew they would not impede his progress, and prevent his doing mischief. Every now and then, after being lost to sight for a time, he would come charging out upon one or other of us, with his nose to the ground, making strange grunting noises, kicking up pieces of hardened soil, and crashing through the thick thorny tangle. Seeing that my light-coloured steed only made me a conspicuous object for a charge, and that riding with anything like safety was impossible with my terrified horse in a heavy bush country, I watched my opportunity, slipped from his back, and, handing him over to one of my Kaffirs, hurriedly directed him to get away to the safest place he could find, whilst I turned my attention to our infuriated pursuers. The Kaffir fastened the horse up in the



WAGON TRAVELLING IN AFRICA.

bush, and then, apprehensive of his own safety, clambered up into a tree. Whilst creeping along, almost bent double, I heard a crashing in the undergrowth some short distance from me, and climbing on a rising ground, I saw the rhinoceros emerge from some cover, and charge my horse, which would have been sacrificed in an instant if I had not stopped him in mid-career by a lucky shot just behind the shoulder-blade, which brought him up, and caused him to charge back in the direction of the Kaffir, who was shouting 'blue murder' from his elevated sanctuary amongst the branches of a good-sized mimosa. I now re-mounted, and getting into some more open ground, began to feel myself once more master of the situation; so again gave chase to the infuriated animal, who, whilst thundering along apparently in mad pursuit of something, afforded me a fair shot at his shoulder, which brought him to his knees. Jan now arrived upon the scene, and handing me a spare gun, I discharged both barrels in the region of his heart, which ended his troubles. Even while lying at the point of death, there appeared to be a vicious twinkle and a look indicative of anything rather than surrender in the eye of the black rhinoceros. After a good deal of shouting we collected all hands, and lying down under a tree quite exhausted, I confess that I was oblivious of everything else for some time, my only real wish being for utter quiet and rest."

The different incidents of rhinoceros hunting are represented in the engravings, which also give a fair delineation of bush scenery, and of the temporary residences of colonists in this part of Africa, with their general mode of travelling in a waggon drawn by twelve span of oxen. These waggons are the only vehicles that will stand the wear and tear of African travel. The wheels are made of the famous umsimbity or Natal ironwood, so called from its strength and durability; whilst the truck or body is of umkoba, a tough, durable, yellow wood, which



RHINOCEROS SHOOTING.

stands the climate well. The top is formed of arched laths of a lighter description covered with rough, coarse canvas, under which the hammocks are slung. These hanging beds are not at all uncomfortable, and when the waggon is in motion the occupant might well imagine himself at sea. The vehicle is naturally of a great weight, for it is necessary to have every part most substantially built to stand the bad roads and passes. It often constitutes an African trader's home for years together.

CHAPTER VIII.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

“ Away, away, from the dwellings of men,
By the wild deer's haunt, by the buffalo's glen ;
By valleys remote, where the Oribi plays,
Where the gnu, the gazelle, and the hart-beeste graze ;
And the kudor, and eland, unhunted recline,
By the skirts of grey forests o'erhung with wild vine,
Where the elephant browses at peace in his wood,
And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood ;
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will,
In the fen where the wild ass is drinking his fill.”

PRINGLE.

SOME twenty years ago, when Natal was in its infancy, and the district between the Limpopo and the Zambesi was a *terra incognita*, rarely visited, except by a few elephant-hunters, there were two brothers, Hans and Septimus, or, as the latter was more commonly called, Kleine van Jansen, who had the reputation of having travelled further into the interior than any of their *confrères* in the pursuit of their calling, which was trading, eked out with elephant-hunting. Their head-quarters were at Notoanis, a fine, well-watered district lying under the Hangslip mountains, and bordering on the Nylstroom, one of the tributaries of the Limpopo. In those days the country abounded in all kinds of game, and, although the Boers possessed considerable numbers of cattle, *wild braad*, or venison, was the staple article of food ; and an ox, unless disabled, was rarely killed, except on high days and holidays.

The little village settlement to which the Van Jansens belonged consisted of five Dutch families, knit together more or

less by intermarriages, and living in the same kraal for mutual protection, as there was a deadly feud raging between the Boers and the Bechuanas and Kaffir tribes, which originated in the cattle-lifting propensities of both parties.

Again, there was no love lost between the Dutch and the few English traders who came with waggons full of goods to barter for ivory with the natives in this part of South Africa; and, although there was no open rupture between the races at that time, still they seemed to regard each other with suspicion, and had little in common together. For my introduction to the Van Jansens, with whom I afterwards became intimately associated, I was indebted to chance, and our meeting took place under the following circumstances: I was following up the slots of a sable antelope that I had seen pass into a clump of mimosa close to the Makoko river, some forty odd miles to the westwards of the Hangslip range, when I noticed three waggons drawn up under the shade of a grove of makolani trees.

Although neither hungry nor thirsty, the canvas tent, curling smoke, and white women's forms in the African bush were sights that were as welcome as meeting a vessel from home after a long cruise in unfrequented seas; so I gave up the trail and reconnoitred the camp. My presence was almost immediately made known to the inmates by the baying of half a dozen dogs of a nondescript breed that gave tongue in every key, and as I approached I was hailed in a somewhat gruff tone of voice by Hans van Jansen, a stout, burly Hollander, who, roah in hand, asked me, in his own vernacular, "Who I was, and where I was going." Although my knowledge of Dutch was extremely limited I had a fair smattering of German, and, replying in that language, made him understand my answer. He then, in fair English, asked me if I happened to be a doctor, and beckoned me forward. I told him that I was not, but that I had a chest of

medicines in my waggon, and knew their use, and that he was welcome to anything I might have. "God must have sent you, my friend, in our sore distress, for we have a sick camp, and one of my nephews lies dead." I sent some of my people to my *compagnon de voyage*, Captain Stevenson, bidding him to hasten up the waggons that were some three miles in the rear, while I went to see the sick, which consisted of several bad cases of fever. It appears that the whole party had pitched their camp for some days in a low, swampy valley for the sake of the green forage for their cattle, and the malaria had brought on virulent intermittent fever, which had prostrated nearly the whole camp. There were three apparently very serious cases; Van Jansen's sister, who had lost her eldest boy the day before, was delirious and raving, whilst her younger brother was almost in a state of insensibility; and Kleine van Jansen was so weak and exhausted from constant attacks of fever that he was unable to sit up, and seemed perfectly helpless. As soon as the waggons came up I had a consultation with Stevenson, and we made up a quantity of cooling drinks, and a strong decoction of quinine with which we dosed the whole camp, for they all looked as yellow as guineas, and more or less ailing. Hans van Jansen his brother-in-law, Schmidt, Stevenson, and I then performed the last rites over the young fellow who had died the day before, taking the precaution to bury thorny bushes over the grave to prevent the corpse being disinterred by hyænas. The next morning, finding there was a marked improvement in the appearance of our patients, I persuaded Van Jansen to make a move and shift his camp to some high ground overlooking the river, where there was fine shade, whilst, at the same time, if there was a breath of air stirring, we were sure to get the benefit of it. By my directions an ox was killed and boiled down into strong soup, for the use of the sick; and leaving Stevenson in medical charge, with directions to administer

strong doses of quinine every four hours, Van Jansen and I mounted our horses, and, attended by about a score of our followers and a party of Bushmen, went up-stream for the purpose of killing some game for camp use. I was astonished to see the number of different kinds of water-fowl that swarmed on every side. Pelicans, flamingoes, cranes, herons, geese, ducks, teal, snipe, and scores of eagles, falcons, and hawks were circling about, uttering their peculiarly shrill, wild cries; whilst every now and again we passed numbers of huge crocodiles floating on the surface of the water or basking in the mud on the sloping banks. These repulsive-looking brutes, although extremely tenacious of life, are easily enough killed in the day, when they plunge into the water upon the approach of man; but at night they are always prompt to attack, and as they lie in wait for animals coming to quench their thirst, they may be easily mistaken for logs of wood; consequently one is obliged to be extremely careful when venturing near water at night. Although I always endeavour to extirpate these vermin if I find them anywhere near the haunts of man, on the present occasion, notwithstanding I had several chances of favourable shots, I forbore to fire, lest the report of my rifle might disturb other game; and after a tramp of about two hours, during which we put up several pallahs and quaggas, we came to a reed-marsh formed by a bend in the bed of the river, in which a troop of about eighty buffaloes were browsing.

Making a detour so as to get on some tolerably high cliffs of red earth that fringed the bank of the river, we approached under cover of low bushes, to the brink of the scarp which commanded an admirable view of the herd, who, unconscious of our presence, were indulging in a siesta after their morning feed. Although several were within easy shooting distance I begged my companion not to fire, as I never before had such a splendid



AFRICAN MONKEYS.

opportunity of watching the doings of these animals in their own wild haunts, and I wanted to observe them. Some were lying down asleep, others lazily nibbled the younger green shoots of herbage, whilst at a short distance off, a couple of young bulls were engaged in single combat, which several of the herd seemed to watch with great interest. With heads lowered and tails erect, they charged each other repeatedly, and from the crashing noise of their massive foreheads meeting, the shock must have been paralyzing, were it not for the protection the base of the horns affords. As it was, very little actual damage appeared to have been done to either combatant; they were very evenly matched, and after having fought several rounds, until they were both pretty well out of breath, they moved off in different directions, each being accompanied by a few special admirers.

Having somewhat gratified my curiosity and severely tested the patience of our native followers, before whose eyes floated visions of an unlimited supply of beef, I left Van Jansen in order to outflank the herd on the other side. I strolled gently along the edge of the cliff, keeping closely under cover, until by careful stalking I got within a hundred yards of a mighty bull who, unsuspecting of danger, was lying down surrounded by his seraglio, each member of which seemed to be more or less engaged in administering to his bovine comfort; two cows licking him behind the ears, whilst a third was rubbing him down with her muzzle and massive forehead. The old patriarch denoted his satisfaction at these gentle attentions, by alternately caressing one or the other with his tongue, and now and then giving vent to his feelings by a low guttural bellow, preceded by a succession of moaning grunts. All at once a gentle ripple in the air wafted the taint of man's presence to some of the outlying stragglers who were scouting in the direction where Van Jansen was posted; the signal denoting

"danger afoot" was given by an old cow and repeated on all sides; and in a moment the whole herd were crashing wildly through the reeds. On the first intimation of alarm being given, the old bull sprang on his legs, and rushing forward a few paces, stood for a moment with his nose stretched high in the air, as if sniffing in the wind, and his brawny chest being fully exposed, I raised my rifle—a double 8-bore, by Westley Richards—and gave him the contents of both barrels in rapid succession, aiming at the point where the neck seemed to enter the body. On receiving the first shot he staggered back a yard or two, but at the second, he pitched heavily forward and fell stone dead; whilst his companions, faithful to their allegiance, notwithstanding their manifest alarm at the reports, charged gallantly in different directions, as if to challenge the intruder who had dared to invade the domain of their stricken lord, returning from time to time to the fallen bull. Taking my second rifle from Nagoma, I dropped a young cow with a bullet behind the shoulder, and was about to pull trigger at a half-grown calf, when I heard a wild shriek, followed up by a couple of shots a short distance behind me, and immediately afterwards one of the Damara guides told me that two "keitloa" (the two-horned black rhinoceros) had turned our rear, and suddenly charged down upon our people without their offering them the slightest molestation. When the buffalo were first sighted we sent all our followers, except the gun-carriers, with the horses to the rear, there to await our return; and it appears that two of their number whilst in search of wild fruit, disturbed the "keitloa," who were enjoying a snooze under the shade of a grove of kushshai trees. The rhinoceros were lying down on their sides, fast asleep, when first discovered; but awakened by the voices of the men, in the twinkling of an eye they were on their legs, and undismayed by the shouting and a couple of shots fired at them, they charged the men furiously,

and obliged them to take refuge in trees, when, enraged at their escape, they gave vent to their spleen by tearing down the bushes in their path. Van Jansen, who had killed one buffalo and wounded a second with his heavy roar, now rejoined me, and we determined to follow up the spoor of the rhinoceros. Having carefully reloaded my big rifle with a Jacob's shell in the right barrel, and a hardened three-ounce round-headed cylindrical bullet in the left, I lent my companion an 8-gauge double smooth-bore, as a second gun, and, accompanied only by Nagoma carrying my spare rifle, we made tracks for the scene of the Damaras' discomfiture. The fresh spoor was everywhere to be seen, but the trails crossed and recrossed each other so frequently that it was scarcely possible to discover the actual line of retreat. We had followed the spoor some distance when we found it doubled back to a patch of thick bush close to where we first took it up; and we were considering what the next move should be, when, suddenly, our suspense was terminated in the most abrupt manner;—for the male rhinoceros, with a fiendish, shrill snort, came tearing down at us with horns lowered and tail straight on end, closely followed by his mate. I sprang on one side so as to let them pass, but Van Jansen, who was also right in their line of charge, trusting to the efficiency of his heavy roar, stood his ground and coolly let drive when the huge brute was within half-a-dozen paces of him. Although the shot must have told severely at that short distance, it did not disable him or even stay his course for a second: he merely staggered from the shock, and swerved a little to one side. As he passed me, I let drive and planted the shell just behind the near shoulder; when, almost instantaneously, every vital function in the whole frame of the animal seemed to be checked, for he dropped in a heap, doubled up with his knees under him, at Van Jansen's feet. I had hardly pulled trigger when the widowed mate,



RHINOCEROS GOING THE PACE

cocking her head on one side in a most knowing manner, with a vicious rolling of her cunning little eyes, and a scream of rage mingled with distress, bore furiously down upon me—but as she lowered her head as she approached, I aimed at the centre of her brawny neck, and the heavy bullet, after smashing some of the vertebræ, passed into the region of the heart; for rolling head-over-heels in the most extraordinary manner, she fell stone dead within a few yards of her spouse.

“In death they were not divided.”

“Hondred duizend losgebroken duivels! But this is hot work for a man with a large family!” exclaimed the Dutchman, as soon as he had somewhat recovered his usual equanimity of mind; for although brave as a lion, his nerves were somewhat shaken at his narrow escape from impalement. “If it had not been for your lucky shot, that horn would have spoiled the seat of the biggest pair of breeches in Namaqua Land, I’ll be bound,” continued he as he measured the front horn, which was nearly six spans, or fifty-four inches, whilst the hinder one was somewhat less than a foot.

On examination of the bull, I found that the heavy bullet of Van Jansen’s roah had ploughed up the forehead and entered the neck, but somewhat too high up to prove mortal, whilst the Jacobs’ shell I had administered behind the shoulder, bursting in the region of the heart, had caused instantaneous death. Having assembled the people by a call from my hunting-horn, I cut off the horns, which are joined to a knob of bone attached by strong ligaments to the nose and firmly set in the skin, and returned to the marsh where we had killed the buffalo. The bull and two cows were lying dead, whilst the fourth, a handsome young bull, was standing as if keeping guard over the dead cow, killed by Van Jansen, with one of its fore-legs dangling, the roah bullet having shattered the fore-arm. All

the rest of the herd had disappeared, having made their way up-stream along the bed of the river. Knowing from experience what a formidable antagonist a wounded buffalo is, Van Jansen and I approached with great caution, and when within sixty yards, as he turned his ponderous head round, my companion fired,—but his bullet struck too high and glanced off the rocky mass at the base of the horns; although knocked back on his haunches by the shock of the blow, he was on his legs again in a moment, and uttering a most unearthly bellow, came tearing down at us upon three legs. I now gave him a shot,—but as I pulled trigger, my foot slipped in a large rat-hole, and I fell on my knees, my bullet singing through the air wide of the mark. Whilst on the ground, however, I let drive with my second barrel, and the bullet entering his muzzle, partially stunned him, and again he rolled over; but such was his tenacity of life that he once more got on his legs, and with low subdued moans indicative of pain, but still full of pluck, tried to drag himself towards us. The crashing effect of our heavy projectiles, however, told with fearful effect, and again and again he tottered and fell. Van Jansen—who in the meantime had reloaded his roah—now stepped up and gave him a *coup de grâce* behind the ear, when, with a surly groan, he staggered and fell dead.

We now remounted our horses and rode back to camp, sending a waggon and pack-bullock to bring in the buffalo hides and flesh. The rhinoceros meat we left for the natives who gathered round on hearing the shots; as, although the white rhinoceros, when young, is not bad eating, the flesh of the “keitloa” is as tough as old boots. The change of camp had proved beneficial to our fever-stricken patients, and all, whilst doing well, expressed themselves most grateful to Stevenson for his constant assiduity in administering to their comfort. Round the watch-fire that night, Van Jansen related our adventure with

the rhinoceros ; and, under the soothing influence of a bottle of hollands, it was unanimously decided that Stevenson and I should be made free of the Boer territory, to come and go as we liked ; and from that time we both received almost brotherly kindnesses from everybody in camp.



SKULL OF A HIPPOPOTAMUS.

CHAPTER IX.

SOUTHERN AFRICA.

THE pasturage being nearly exhausted in the immediate neighbourhood of our camp, and the fresh traces of lions being too numerous for us to allow the cattle to stray to any distance from it without being closely watched and guarded ; we "trecked," shifted our quarters some twenty miles to the north-east, and halted on some high and well-wooded ground, that formed a kind of peninsula between the fork of the Mokoka river and another tributary stream. Here we found abundance of good water and pasturage for our cattle, whilst the numerous spoor and fresh sign of elephant, gave us every reason to anticipate good sport. We therefore determined to make this our headquarters for some days ; and, to save ourselves trouble and anxiety about the safety of our cattle, constructed a rude kind of abattis of felled trees, interlaced with brushwood from one stream to the other, thus enclosing a good-sized strip of ground tolerably secure from night-attacks of wild animals. The entrance was closed by rude gates, and furthermore guarded by a huge watch-fire, round which most of our native followers slept.

The sun had hardly sunk below the horizon when a nocturnal chorus commenced, which proved the wisdom of our precautionary measures ; most of the "vleys" or rain pools in the neighbourhood being dried up in consequence of an unusually severe drought, a great number of wild animals came down to the river to drink, and the game was followed by several distinct troops or families of lions, whose terror-

striking roars occasioned great alarm and disquietude amongst our oxen. Several times in the early part of the night the lions came close to our fence, but they never attempted to force it, being probably deterred from so doing by the taint of man's footsteps, which they—in common with all other wild animals—will avoid crossing if possible.

During the early part of the night, whilst peering into the darkness from the gate, I frequently saw the glimmering of lions' eyes, on which the blaze of our watch-fire was reflected as they prowled round about our camp, attracted by the smell of the cattle; but they were too wary to come near enough to offer a certain shot, so I would not pull trigger at them, and towards midnight they took themselves off. We had all worked hard at the barricade, and were too tired for any of us to think of watching for game that night: but on examining the banks of the river the next morning, we found that it had been visited by separate herds of elephant, as the spoor showed that each party had come and gone in different directions. There were also "signs" of rhinoceros, buffalo, hartebeeste, pallahs, sasabys, and reed-buck, having drank at the stream within the last three days.

After having reconnoitred the immediate neighbourhood to make sure that none of the marauders who had serenaded us during the night were lurking about, we commenced the construction of two large and comfortable "skarms," or ambuscades, which commanded the gaps in the banks of the river, down which the animals came to drink. The skarm, to be properly made, for elephant shooting, is a pit from twelve to fourteen feet long, four feet wide, and four feet deep, so that two persons can lie or turn comfortably in it. About seven feet of the centre part is strongly flat-roofed over with stout logs, which are again covered with earth, and young bushes are often planted over it. Thus it resembles a barrow having

two entrances, which are left open at each end, and here the hunters sit with only the upper part of their heads above the ground. Great care must be taken that the general appearance shows no deviation from the common order of things, and that there are no signs of human occupation about it. The more natural it appears, the better chance the hunters have of close shots; and of course great attention must be paid that the skarm is constructed to leeward of the track by which the game is likely to come, otherwise their keen sense of smelling will instantly detect the atmosphere tainted by man's presence.

A couple of hours before sunset, Stevenson and Schmidt took up their quarters in one skarm, whilst Hans van Jansen and myself, accompanied by Nagoma, occupied the other. Some time before sunset a troop of zebras came gambolling round about our skarm, but we allowed them to go unscathed, as their flesh—although eatable when nothing else is to be had—is rank and strong, having, moreover, a peculiarly disagreeable odour. They were followed by a herd of pallahs, but as these drank at a bend in the river, almost out of gunshot, we contented ourselves with watching their doings. The next visitants were a fine male koodoo, with a grand pair of spiral horns, and three does, who came within sixty yards of us, and both Hans and I, firing double shots at the same moment, managed to drop the buck and two fine fat does that would have graced any larder. The report of our rifles brought half a dozen of our native followers from the camp, which was not more than a quarter of a mile away; so we sent the game in, and at the same time gave strict orders that none of our people should venture outside the gates until morning. Hardly had we retaken our position, when a running fire of five shots in the other skarm told us that its occupants were having their turn of sport; and shortly afterwards Stevenson came round and informed us that

they had killed a large white rhinoceros. This proved to be a very fine specimen of the kobaba, the anterior horn being fifty-six inches long. Both Schmidt and Stevenson had been so devoured by mosquitoes that they determined to return to camp, but as these pests of the river-side had not troubled us, we remained in our skarm, and bidding Onkombo keep a bright look-out, and awake us if he saw anything, we were soon in the land of dreams.

We must have slept soundly for some hours, when I was suddenly awoke by a curious blowing noise, which I at once recognised as being one of those peculiar sounds emitted only by elephants. Cursing my own stupidity for entrusting the watch to a native, I seized my rifle and peered cautiously round; but no elephants were in sight, although two black rhinoceros were wallowing in the river, and hordes of hartebeeste and sasabys were browsing on the young vegetation on its banks. They, too, had heard the ominous noises; for the rhinoceros, uttering grunts of defiance, made their way up the stream, whilst the antelope gathered round their leaders and prepared to make a move. Giving my henchman a *gentle reminder* for sleeping on his post, I roused Van Jansen, and in a moment we were on the alert. The moon was now well above the horizon, and our ambuscade being on high ground, we could see a good way up and down the river.

We remained on the *qui vive*, for nearly half an hour, and I had begun to think that the taint on the air of the dead game had scared away the elephants, when—without the slightest sound or intimation of their approach—seven mighty bulls, glided noiselessly as shadows into the open ground before us, and stood with their trunks raised and their great ears distended, as if seeking to wind the taint in the breeze and catch the slightest sound. The leader—whose large white tusks glistened in the pale moonlight, stood perfectly motionless for

at least ten minutes, as if undecided whether to advance or retreat; and his reverie might have continued further to try our patience had not a couple of hyenas for once served us a good turn. Attracted by the scent of the dead rhinoceros, they brushed boldly past the elephants, and, passing within a dozen yards of our hiding-place, made their way towards the other skarm where the dead beast lay. The fetid stench that these animals leave behind, probably overpowered any other suspicious odour that might have led the leader to suspect danger, for he now fearlessly approached our skarm, closely followed by the others. So stealthily, however, did they move, that no sound of their footsteps betrayed their presence : not a stone rattled, not a leaf rustled, nor a twig cracked under their ponderous weight, and they had advanced to within twenty yards of us, when suddenly the leader gave a snort, followed by a shrill scream of alarm, and throwing up his trunk, trumpeted loudly. He had come to the spot where the koodoo had fallen, and detected the smell of the fresh blood. For some time I had watched every movement with my rifle pointed towards his massive shoulder, and on the first intimation of alarm I let drive right and left, aiming just behind it; whilst Van Jansen also fired two rapid shots at the "dood plek" (a fatal spot behind the shoulder) of a second bull, scarcely inferior to the leader in height, but not so squarely built. Van Jansen's aim was more certain than mine, for the elephant he fired at fell dead in his tracks, whilst the leader, trumpeting hoarsely with rage, tore frantically towards the river, followed by his frightened companions. Having reloaded, we stepped out of our ambuscade to reconnoitre, and found the herd all gathered round their wounded leader, and evidently attempting to hold him up with their trunks, for he staggered and reeled about from side to side, unable to stand without help. Seeing at a glance that he had been struck, and was in his last throes, we paid our attention to the others, and,

taking advantage of the fairest shots offered, both fired together at different elephants. This time I was more successful, for I dropped one stone dead with a bullet between the eye and the ear, and rolled over a second with a Jacobs' shell, which entered at that vital spot where the outstretched ear appeared to spring from the head. Van Jansen was not so lucky; for although the bull he fired at dropped to his shot and floundered on the ground, he soon recovered his legs, and, accompanied by an unwounded pal, charged, tail on end, straight at us. Luckily, my second rifle was loaded with Jacobs' shells and six drams of powder, and as they came tearing down with upraised trunks, I opened fire at them right and left, aiming at their massive chests—and, with scarcely a groan, they rolled over and over. We again reloaded and approached the stricken leader, who had fallen to his knees from extreme weakness, but he seemed too far gone to heed our presence; so, stepping up, I gave him a *coup de grâce* just behind the ear, when—a tremor passing over his body—he sunk gently to the ground, dead.

Only two escaped out of the herd, and they, on making their way along the bed of the river, were attacked by the rhinoceros, which turned out to be of the black "keitloa" species, the most savage and vindictive animal in Africa. We reloaded our rifles, and made our way to the scene of conflict, intending to take action against both combatants; but the field of fight being a large swamp overgrown with high reeds, above which only the backs of the elephants were visible, as they charged or wheeled round to avoid the attack of their infuriated adversaries, we declined to enter the lists, and contented ourselves with watching operations. From all appearance the elephants were getting the worst of it, for they emitted the most piteous cries of distress whilst their opponents indulged in hoarse savage grunts and snorting noises of menace. At last the elephants, thoroughly worsted, took to the water; and, with the aid of my night-glass,

I could see them wading and swimming down stream in full retreat. The rhinoceros remained the masters of the field and had won the fight. As matters stood, we did not care to spoil the victors, but, returning to our skarm, rolled ourselves up in our carosses and slept till daylight; when we were awakened by the yells and screams of delight of the Damaras and our other native followers, at the prospect of an unlimited quantity of food and great stores of elephant fat.

During the day we constructed two other skarms at a spot farther up the river, as the strong smell of decomposed flesh was sufficient to prevent elephants from quenching their thirst near the old place; and here we had great sport, killing seventeen bull elephants to our four guns in five days, besides quantities of other game. At the end of this time, our invalids being in a fair way towards convalescence, we made "tracks" towards Notoanis, as ominous rumours were about concerning a grand cattle-lifting raid in the Nylstroom district, which had been perpetrated by one of Moselikatzee's former allies; and a severe encounter had taken place between the natives and a Boer commando, in which the latter was said to have come off second best. Van Jansen and his people would not hear of our proceeding to the Zambesi until we had first seen their home, enjoyed their hospitality, and been presented in due form to the Landroost, or head magistrate of the district, who appeared to exercise the functions of civil governor; so we continued our way together.

CHAPTER X.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

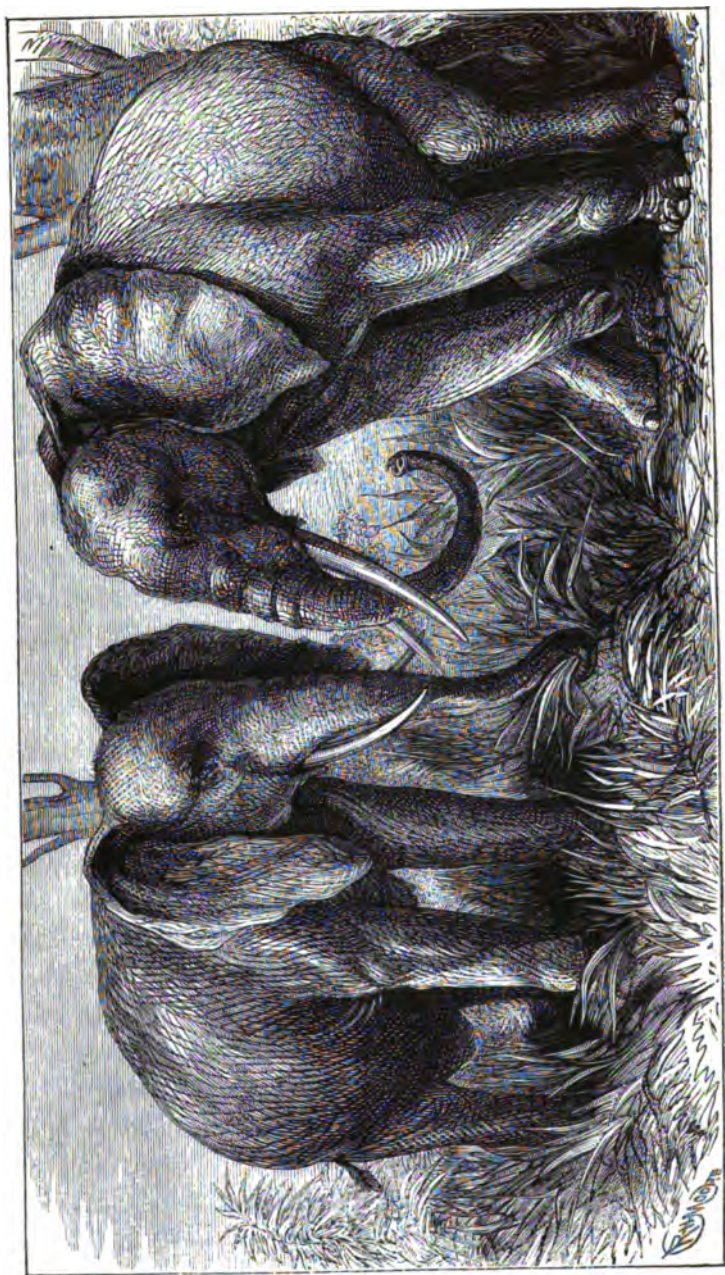
NOTOANIS, the head-quarters of my friends the Van Jansens, is a small hamlet, consisting of seven or eight comfortable one-storied farmhouses, two or three smaller domiciles, and numerous cattle-kraals and outbuildings, built on an elevated ridge overlooking the Nylstroom river, and surrounded with fields of maize and corn; whilst in the background rise the Kangslip mountains, with their blue valleys and lofty granite peaks, which, in the early morning, when wreathed with grey mists, put one in mind of the wilder parts of Scotland. Here, surrounded by their numerous flocks and herds, close upon a dozen Dutch families lived a thoroughly patriarchal kind of life; varying the monotony of farming by frequent hunting expeditions, for the surrounding country was alive with game. Two kinds of bustards—*corans* and *paaw*—guinea-fowls, four varieties of partridges, quail, and ortolans were plentiful all about the cultivated lands; whilst in the *veldt*, or open plain on the other side of the river, herds of different kinds of antelope were constantly to be found. Besides being a hunter's paradise, nowhere in South Africa have I seen such evidence of luxuriant fertility; fine trees of graceful foliage overshadowed the houses, and bananas, figs, apricots, peaches, pomegranates, and several native fruits flourished in the gardens, whilst the vineyards looked in admirable condition. The whole of the cultivation was carried on by native labour—Kaffirs, Hottentots, and Zulus, if managed with tact, making excellent

outdoor servants. We found the Dutch Boers very good-natured and agreeable fellows; and I think they certainly are the biggest race of men in the world, for scarcely an adult man in Notoanis stood under 6ft., whilst several exceeded that height by 4in. or 5in., and the average of their weight must have been between 14st. and 15st. Their breadth of shoulders, girth of chest and limbs, and muscular development are as striking as their height; but from their inert mode of life and the vast quantity of food they consume, they generally run into flesh at a very early age, and become ponderous and awkwardly unwieldy. This, however, is not the case with those who are fond of field-sports; and amongst the Boers I have found famous hunters that few men would excel in energy, activity, or endurance. The women, as a rule, were fair, plump, handsome, of goodly proportions, and most prolific, as all the benedicts in the settlement seemed to be blessed with large and increasing families, and every house was full of fair-haired boys and girls, the picture of robust health. There were also a number of grown-up young ladies; during our sojourn several dances were got up, and my friend Stevenson—who was a fair performer both on the violin and the cornet—was in great request on these festive occasions, as the only other musical instruments in the settlement were a quaint ram-shackle kind of harpsichord and a couple of guitars.

After enjoying the hospitality of the Van Jansens for nearly three weeks, and shooting only antelopes and small game of different kinds for the pot, Stevenson and I determined to make a move for the hilly Makalaka country north of the Limpopo, where elephants were said to be very numerous. Our hosts and a large gathering of stalwart hunters from different parts of the country determined to accompany us, and we looked a most formidable party as we debouched from the valley, and scoured across the plain in a widely-extended line

With the exception of our guides and a few after-riders, with spare horses for carrying in any game we killed on the march, all our natives following remained with the waggons, in order to extricate them in case of meeting with obstructions en route; and in this manner we tracked for some days along the Nylstroom river until we came to its junction with the Limpopo, which stream was too deep and rapid to ford, so a large raft was constructed, and our waggons and gear were ferried across.

We were now in a grand game country, and in many places by the river the fresh spoor of rhinoceros and elephant were plainly visible; but the low lands were very unhealthy, and as there was great danger of our losing our horses by tsetse, we continued our route by forced marches, in a north-easterly direction for twelve days longer, up the Schaschi river, when we came to a fine table-land, round which rose the Masiringee mountains. Here we encamped in a beautiful wide valley, full of green trees of various kinds, the most conspicuous of which were the majestic nwanas that towered high above the surrounding verdure like mighty monarchs of the forests. Close in front of our camp flowed the Tulne, a tributary of the Schascha river, which at that time of the year had dwindled down to a narrow stream not more than a dozen yards wide and scarcely knee-deep; but in places there were deep *vleys*, or pools, where elephant and the larger description of game came down to drink. As we had determined to halt here for some days all hands set to work to construct a large kraal to protect our cattle from marauding lions, whose nocturnal serenades had on several occasions kept us on the *qui vive* during the dark hours; round this our followers dug a deep trench, throwing the earth inward, so that from the outside our construction resembled a field-work with an abattis along the crest. Our consisted of twenty-three hunters and about eighty native



A COUPLE OF GIANTS.

followers, and the former were divided into three sections, one of which, by turn, remained at home as a camp guard in case of any hostile demonstration being made by marauding Kaffirs; whilst the other two sections started in different directions soon after dawn every morning, and scoured the country in search of game. This is an excellent arrangement for a large hunting party like ours, travelling in a country "where might is right, and he may take who has the power and he may keep who can." Not only is the camp always more or less secure from attack, but also both hunters and their horses have one day's rest in three, which in the long run is conducive to their general welfare, considering the hard work they go through, and the hard fare they have often to put up with. The life of a professional elephant-hunter is one of considerable peril and privation; in the end most of them come to grief, either from accident or, perhaps more frequently, from sickness, brought on by constant over-exertion of physical strength under the intense heat of a tropical sun, the scarcity of wholesome water, and the want of nutritious food. Still there is intense excitement in the sport; and it is an additional satisfaction to know that every good tusker bagged adds, on an average, a fifty-pound note to the exchequer.

The second day of our arrival, as Ruyter, one of the most experienced of the Dutch hunters who belonged to our mess, was returning to camp in the evening, laden with eland beef, he came across the spoor of a large herd of elephants, which had evidently been drinking in a neighbouring vley the night before. As there was a good moon, Van Jansen, Ruyter, Vandermeir, Stevenson, and myself determined to watch by the water in case they might again drink at the same spot; and about seven o'clock we mounted, and, accompanied by about a dozen followers, who were to take charge of our horses upon our arrival near the pool, set out on our expedition.

Moonlight nights in South Africa are brilliant beyond conception, and even the most commonplace scenery, when viewed at such times, appears to possess a weird and mysterious influence that is not discernible in the daytime. Again, many nocturnal animals, whose forms are rarely seen by sunlight, boldly walk the night; and when every bush and hollow tree emits strange noises, caused by the invisible insect world, the fiend-like cry of the jackal, or the hysterical laugh of the spotted hyena, rouses the echoes and produces startling effects. As we rode along we passed a couple of white rhinoceros and several troops of pallahs and hartebucks, making their way towards the water to drink; but we were after nobler game, and allowed them to go unscathed. Shortly afterwards we nearly came into collision with a large herd of buffalo, who at first seemed inclined to dispute our right of way, but eventually, after snorting defiantly, as if to challenge us to do our worst, swerved off to our rear; which we were not sorry for, as elephants were heard trumpeting in the bush on the opposite side of the river, and had we been obliged to fire at our assailants in self-defence, the reports of our rifles might have deterred them from coming down to the river to drink. Soon after this little episode we came to a deep pool in a bend of the river, at one end of which a troop of pallah, intermixed with zebra, were drinking; here Ruyter and Vandermeir resolved to watch, whilst Stevenson, Van Jansen, and myself continued our way up-stream to another vley at the foot of a rocky gorge about a mile and a half further to the northward.

Having selected a somewhat sheltered spot between two huge boulders of rock for our people and horses to remain in, we lighted a fire, where it was not likely to be seen from any distance, as a protection against wild animals; and, accompanied by three of our followers, carrying spare guns and waterproof rugs, we made our way to the water. At the head of the vley rose a

semicircular ledge of rock, some eighteen or twenty feet high, over which a small stream of water trickled down from the densely-wooded ravine above, so that the valley we were in here formed a kind of *cul-de-sac*. The water was, however, pure and limpid, and evidently much frequented by all kinds of wild animals, notwithstanding its secluded position; for on both sides, where the banks were low and sloping, the fresh spoor of elephants were plainly visible, whilst the slots of different varieties of antelope were innumerable. When we first approached the water a troop of doe koodoos, with fawns at heel, were drinking; but they were soon scared away by a couple of ill-conditioned hyenas, who howled malignantly as their prey escaped from them. These were succeeded by five old bull buffaloes, who revelled in a cool bath, followed by a roll in the mud. Whilst they were thus enjoying themselves, a lion gave a most appalling roar from some low bush a short distance down-stream; and the buffaloes, retiring from the pool, formed up in close order, and "made a strategic movement towards the rear," dashing their horns about in a most menacing manner.

We waited with breathless impatience for some time, expecting every moment to see the Royal beast approach the water; but, finding that he did not make his appearance, Van Jansen suspected that he had detected the presence of our horses, and suggested that one of us should remain with our people; so we drew straws to determine which of us should go. Stevenson drew the shortest; so we escorted him to their retreat, and again returned to the pool, where we ensconced ourselves behind some rocks, in front of which grew a patch of high reeds. Hardly had we taken up our position, spread our rugs, and made ourselves comfortable, when, without the rustling of a leaf, the cracking of a branch, or the slightest sound denoting his approach, a magnificent bull elephant stepped forth from



SOUNDING THE ALARM.

some dark cover and stood out in bold relief in the bright moonlight. Fortunately, what little breeze there was blew from him towards us, so that he did not catch our wind; but, with the habitual caution of his race, he stood motionless for quite five minutes, with his trunk elevated and his great ears extended, so as to drink in the slightest sound. He now advanced a few paces, showing his vast proportions; the moon's bright rays lighted up his white tusks, which protruded over four feet from his upper jaw, and again he stood a dark, still mass, with a clearly-defined outline, as if chiselled out of solid rock. He now appeared satisfied, gave a low "*Urmph!* *urmph!*"—the signal to the rest of the herd, who came tearing down towards the river—and strode rapidly forward until he was knee-deep in the water, not more than thirty yards from our ambuscade. Hardly had he entered the stream than he winded the taint in the air, caused either by our presence or that of the Kaffirs who were with us, and throwing up his trunk, he trumpeted loudly his note of alarm. It proved his last signal; for whilst his head was elevated, and his massive throat exposed he offered a most tempting shot, of which I took advantage, and, aiming at the centre of his gullet, just where the head is set on the neck, I let drive right and left with my Westley Richards eight bore, that carried two four-ounce spherical-headed plugs, each driven by seven drachms of powder. Before the smoke had cleared away a mighty splash drenched us, and the huge monster, reeling backwards at the shock, fell over flat on his side, and after a few convulsive struggles, ceased to move. The affair was over before my Dutch friend could get up his rifle; and, although he doubtless felt somewhat disappointed at not having had a finger in the pie and being able to claim one of the magnificent tusks, he was very good-tempered, and merely remarked, "*Das was sehr schlimm.*" The rest of the herd, which consisted of eight or nine majestic-

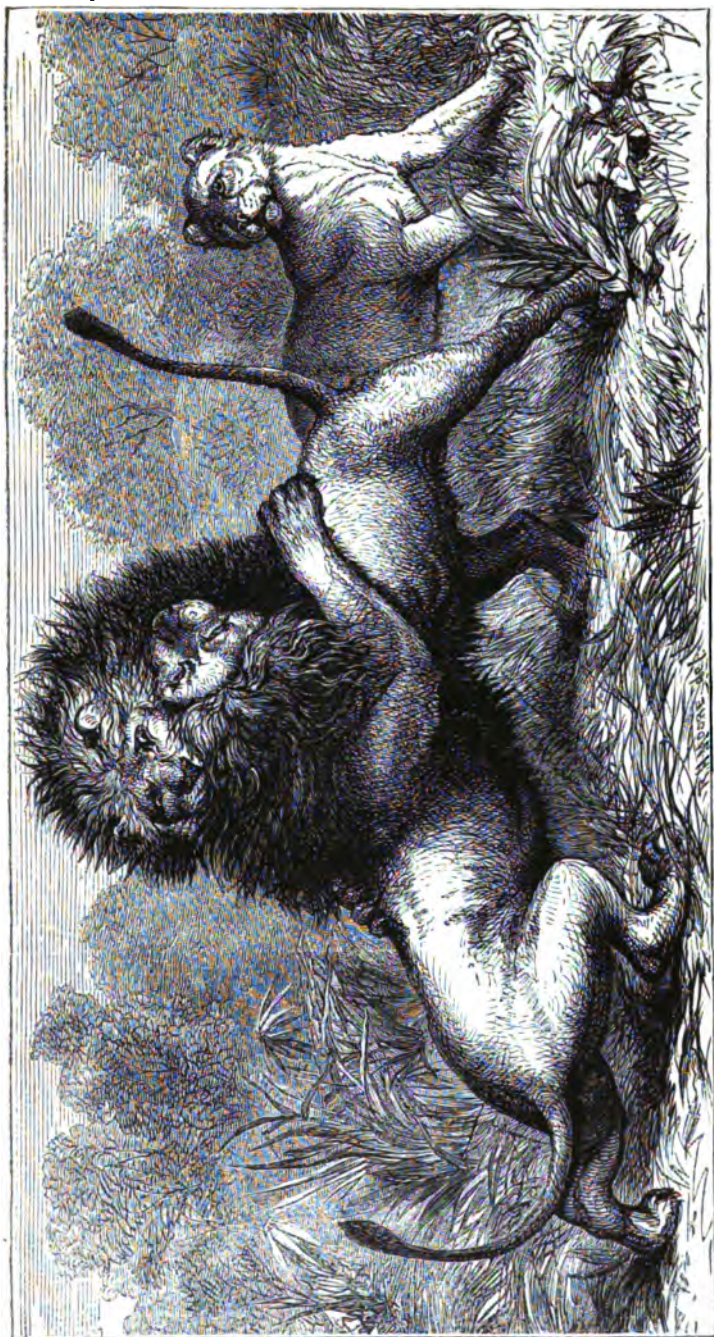
looking bulls, never gave us a chance. The fall of their leader struck them with panic, and they set off at a good round trot in the direction from which they came. Van Jansen and I now returned to the bivouac where we had left Stevenson and our horses; and, having made up the fire and dried our clothes, as the moon became overclouded, we wrapped ourselves in our rugs and slept until daybreak, when we were joined by Ruyter and Vandermeir, who had wounded two bull elephants, and killed two elands and a water-bok with magnificent horns. We accordingly sent a messenger back to camp with the information that "elephants were afoot," and desired that a waggon should be sent to carry in the meat and ivory; and soon afterwards our party received a reinforcement of eight Boer hunters and our pack of dogs, in which quantity made up for quality, for never do I think such a lot of mongrels were seen together. Some of our Kaffirs who had started at early dawn to spoor up the elephants that had visited our vley the night previously, returned, having tracked the herd up to a dense belt of wood, some five or six miles distant, where they were quietly browsing. They reported having left two of their number to watch their movements, so it was resolved to beat up their retreat the first thing after breakfast.

CHAPTER XI.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

THE Boers are all more or less sportsmen, having been accustomed to ride and use the rifle from early childhood ; but, as they are for the most part big heavy men, and stout in proportion to their height, they must be very well mounted to hold their own in a long chase after wild animals. Out of about a dozen Dutch hunters who took part in the hunt I am about to describe, scarcely one of them could have weighed less than 17st. as they turned out equipped for the chase, with their long roers, ox-horn powder-flasks, and broad leather belts that contained bullet and cap pouches, tinder-box, knife, axe, and half a dozen other appurtenances; whilst many of their number as they rode would have turned the scale at 20st.; still their sturdy, well-knit little horses hardly seemed over-weighted as they bounded across the plain, evidently as eager for sport as their riders. Stevenson and I, being both in fair condition from constant hard work, scarcely weighed 10st., so that we were lightly handicapped in comparison with the rest.

Our Kaffir guides led the way at a pace which kept the horses at a fair amble, when, as we were crossing a plain between two belts of mimosa and mokala bush, they pointed out the pugs of a lion that were evidently quite fresh, and appeared to lead into an isolated patch of cover about a mile off. As there was but little chance of the reports of our rifles alarming the elephants, whose retreat was still some miles further on, it was resolved to lay the dogs on the trail; so half



THE RIVAL SUITORS.

of our number rode ahead so as to command the further side of the cover, whilst the Van Jansens, Ruyter, Vandermeir, Stevenson, and I tracked up the pugs until the dogs, which were some distance in the rear, could be brought up.

Long before we got near the thicket, smothered roars and loud growling noises told us that a battle royal was going on amongst the great carnivoræ, so Kleine Van Jansen and Vandermeir rode back to hurry up the dogs, whilst Ruyter, Hans Van Jansen, Stevenson, and I rode up to reconnoitre. The fearful snarling noises that continued to issue from the cover, intermingled with grumbling, moanings, and stifled whimpers, testified as to the obstinacy with which the contest was being maintained; so Stevenson and I, who were determined to get a sight of the combatants if possible, in spite of Van Jansen's and Ruyter's remonstrances, dismounted, and, tethering our horses, crept as noiselessly as possible into the cover. Guided by sounds of war, we soon reached the arena, and found that two magnificent full-grown lions were engaged tooth and nail in mortal combat for the favours of a skittish young lioness, who was looking on, and encouraging the rivals by walking round them as they were locked in each other's grasp, and making peculiar loud purring and whimpering noises. It was a grand sight, for the two noble animals were well and evenly matched, and neither seemed to have gained any material advantage; although it was evident, from the severe injuries that each had received, as well as from the trampled herbage and the appearance of the ground, which was torn up in places, that the fight had been going on for some time before we came up. As all parties were too much engaged in the fray to notice our approach, we managed to clamber up into a tree which commanded a capital view of the field of action without being perceived, and both of us were too fond of fair play to spoil the sport by interfering. For quite ten minutes we watched the

exciting struggle with intense interest, as the two huge creatures rolled over and over like two great cats, their deep-drawn grunting and hard breathing being only varied by crunching and rending noises as fangs and claws tore up each other's flesh. Suddenly, the yelping of dogs was heard at no great distance, and the lioness showed symptoms of uneasiness, and stood motionless a moment as if listening; then she whined and commenced growling, as if to attract the attention of the lions to the suspicious sounds; but they paid no heed to her warning, and she was slinking sneakingly away when, as she passed close under the tree on which we were sitting, Stevenson raised his rifle and rolled her over stone dead with a well-directed bullet, which entered the back of the skull and penetrated the brain. Neither the loud report of the shot nor the fall of the lioness appeared to be noticed by the two enraged combatants, as they did not, even for an instant, relinquish their grip of each other; but, as the dogs were evidently near at hand, and there was no prospect of our seeing the fight right out, I took the opportunity, when the brawny shoulder of one of them was fully exposed as he stood broadside on to me, to let drive a right and left almost simultaneously, and, both bullets penetrating the vital region of the heart and lungs, he fell heavily on his side to the ground, writhing in his last agonies. His antagonist, evidently surprised at his rival's sudden collapse, stood over him for a moment as if bewildered; until a bullet from Stevenson's second barrel cracked loudly against his flank, when, attracted by the smoke, he raised his head in our direction, and then for the first time became aware that other assailants were in the field. Uttering a long, tremulous roar, he rushed forward a few paces, and for a moment I thought he intended to spring upon us, for we were quite within his reach, the forks upon which we were standing not being more than ten feet from the ground, and neither of us was loaded—when suddenly he caught sight of the dead

lioness, who lay doubled up in a heap as she fell on receiving her mortal wound; with a peculiar whine of recognition, utterly regardless of our presence, he strode towards her, licked her face and neck with his great, rough tongue, and patted her gently with his huge paw, as if to awaken her. Finding that she did not respond to his caresses, he sat upon his haunches like a dog, and howled most piteously, until his attention was attracted to his late antagonist, who drew up his limbs convulsively at the moment of dissolution; with a sullen growl, he sprang up and stood over him, roaring defiantly three or four times. At this moment the yelping of the dogs and the cries of encouragement of the Kaffirs sounded close at hand; and, leaping over a low bush, he beat a hasty retreat, for which I felt extremely thankful, as reloading when perched up in a tree is rather an awkward operation.

Soon after his departure the pack made their appearance, with Kleine Van Jansen and his party of Dutchmen, and we had some difficulty in driving the dogs away from the dead lions, and putting them on the trail of the survivor; but the Kaffirs, after a vigorous application of their hippopotamus-hide zamboucs, managed to do this at last, and soon afterwards they again gave tongue, and appeared to push forward in pursuit. We followed up in their rear as fast as we could, and it soon became evident that the lion was retreating but slowly, as at times he turned upon his pursuers, who came yelping back towards us as if seeking our protection. This work continued for some time, until at length he got to the skirts of the cover, and made a bolt out into the plain. There he was met with a volley from the Boer's roers, and struck by several bullets, when he broke back into the cover, and after a few minutes was brought to bay by the dogs. Although severely wounded he committed great havoc amongst them before we could get up; it was a grand sight to see him sitting on his hind-quarters, carelessly



AT BAY.

regarding the swarm of yelping curs that surrounded him, until one or two of the boldest of them, encouraged by his apathetic inaction, came within reach of his paw, when in an instant they were hurled back maimed, mangled, or lifeless. We arranged that the Dutchmen should fire first, and Ruyter took the lead with a huge roer, which, exploding like a young cannon, broke the lion's fore-arm only, and brought him down on three legs in the midst of the pack, who rushed forward at the report. Hans Van Jansen now fired, and his bullet, entering the chest, rolled him over; but in an instant he was again upon his legs, and stood undaunted and undismayed, grand beyond conception, with fire flashing from his eyes, his long black mane straight on end, and the crimson life-stream flowing from his open jaws. Although grievously wounded, and so weak from loss of blood that he could not charge, he still faced his foes with indomitable resolution, and growled his defiance until a well-directed bullet from Stevenson's rifle entered the corner of the eye and ended his career. Scarcely was the breath out of his body than the Kaffirs rushed up and each took a mouthful of the blood that was trickling from his numerous wounds, as they believe that it is a specific which imparts strength and courage to those who partake of it. Leaving some of our people to strip the spoils from the fallen monarchs, we continued our course after the elephants, and by noon arrived at the bed of a small river fringed with patches of thick bush, in one of which it was said that the herd were. The two Kaffirs who had seen them enter at early morning informed us that this was a favourite resort for elephants, as there were three or four deep pools, over-shadowed by great forest trees, where they bathed during the heat of the day, previous to sleeping in the cool shade.

After making a careful reconnaissance of the ground, we found the fresh spoor of several elephants leading into the cover; and, as we could not find any traces of their having

again left it, it was only natural to suppose that they were still there, notwithstanding that no sounds were to be heard indicating their presence, which seemed strange, as the belt of jungle, although stretching for some distance along the banks of the river, was of no great extent; and when unsuspecting of danger and undisturbed, a herd, when browsing, may generally be heard breaking down the young branches on which they feed.

We now held a consultation to arrange our plan of action, and, as the jungle in which the elephants were was very dense and full of wait-a-bit thorns, it was determined to set fire to the line of dry reeds and high grass along the bed of the river, so as to drive them into the open, which was tolerable riding-ground, where our horses could be brought into play. The wind was favourable to our project; and our native followers soon fired the whole line of reeds, whilst the mounted hunters, dividing into two parties, took up their posts on each flank of the cover; it being arranged that the herd should be allowed to get some distance over the plain before the pursuers gave chase, otherwise they might try and break back into the cover, or cross the river where the country was densely wooded. For some minutes we waited, anxiously listening; but although from time to time we heard the crackling of the fire, with occasional rustlings amongst the bushes, we could detect no sound that indicated the presence of elephant. At last we heard a low, grumbling noise, and an old surly buffalo made his appearance, followed by a troop of springbok, and almost immediately afterwards a herd of ten bull elephants noiselessly emerged from the cover, and strode leisurely across the plain. They were all of goodly proportions, and appeared to carry heavy tusks, and it was a grand sight to see them debouch into the open and form up into an irregular line. A huge monster with a very thick pair of ivories brought up the rear, having been the last to break cover; and Stevenson and I determined to devote our special

attention to him. When the herd had got about half a mile over the open country, they swerved off and began to quicken their pace, so it was evident that the other party had commenced the pursuit, and that the elephant had got their wind and taken alarm. All further concealment was now unnecessary, so away we went after them as fast as our horses could carry us. Elephants can get over the ground at a good speed for a short distance, but they soon get blown, and, after the first burst, a horseman can easily overhaul them. Yet a stern chase is ever a long one, and so we found it in this instance, for the herd got a good start, and our horses were pretty well blown before we got up to them. Stevenson, who led the van by some lengths, was the first to commence operations, and as he shot alongside the big tusker we had marked, he planted a right and left well behind the shoulder, and wheeled off just in time to avoid his charge; round the brute came with a shrill scream of rage, and passed at no great distance from Van Jansen, who, in self-defence, was obliged to fire; and the heavy bullet of the roer, entering just behind the ear, tumbled him over and secured the ivory. In the early part of the chase my horse put his foot in a hole and came down a cropper, giving me an awful shaking; but, finding that no bones were broken when I picked myself up, and that my nag was altogether uninjured, I continued the chase, and, although considerably thrown out by my purl, I soon managed to get close up in the wake of an old bull with decent sized tusks, and, forging up to his near-side, gave him the contents of both barrels in the temple, which brought him to his knees; in a moment, however, he scrambled on to his legs and continued his way, although his tottering gait, drooping ears, and listlessly swaying trunk showed that he was hard hit and in great distress. Seeing that he had no intention to charge, I pulled up, reloaded, and again gave chase, and this time I caught him just behind the shoulder whilst his forearm was

well advanced, and he dropped with a crash to the ground. In the meantime, on every side were heard the loud reports of the Boers' heavily loaded roers, followed by the shrieks and trumpeting of the wounded elephants that were rushing wildly over the plain, each followed by one or two hunters, who, on their strong and enduring horses, would doubtlessly have exterminated the whole herd if the chase had not led towards a belt of thick forest, in which three of the number found refuge. As it was we had no reason to complain, for seven pairs of tusks were secured amongst us; not an unprofitable day's work, as the ivory must have weighed over four hundredweight.

Our long chase after the elephant had led us quite twenty miles from our camp at Masiringe, and as the day was nearly spent we knocked up a kind of impromptu kraal for the protection of our horses, a couple of huts for ourselves, and in less than an hour had established a comfortable bivouac for passing the night. Large watch-fires were lighted, round which we reclined and talked over the events of the day and our plans for the morrow, and it was decided that three of our number, with a party of Kaffirs, should remain to collect the ivory, whilst the rest of us returned to camp to send back a waggon for its transport. All our people were regaling themselves to surfeit on elephant's flesh, and as the night came on it was a strange sight to see them cutting up the carcasses by the light of huge fires, like so many demons.

Hardly had the sun gone down than we were serenaded by a party of lions, and during the livelong night the camp was entertained by the dismal choruses of hyenas and jackals, who, attracted by the smell of the flesh, collected in great numbers round the dead elephants. The next morning we were afoot and at breakfast soon after dawn, and the sun was just making his appearance above the horizon as we got into the saddle. Leaving some of our number to make their way back direct to

camp, Ruyter, Van Jansen, Stevenson, and I took a southerly direction, so as to skirt the edge of the Linguapo hills; a range said to be full of game, lying on the left bank of the River Schaschi.

We had ridden over an undulating plain for about an hour without putting up any other game than a few pallah and reitbok, when Stevenson, after sweeping the horizon with his telescope, pointed out a couple of sable antelope that were grazing about a mile distant. Stevenson and Ruyter taking one flank, Van Jansen and I the other, we made a circuit before commencing the pursuit, as all antelope, when alarmed on a plain, make off with their heads to the wind; and our object was to get on each side of our quarry before starting him. With a little management this was effected, and the chase began. For the first mile the antelope got over the ground at a great rate, and seemed to go two yards to our one; but before the second mile was covered they were quite blown, and Stevenson and Ruyter, who were admirably mounted, were almost within shooting-distance, when we lost sight of them in a dried-up watercourse overgrown with bush and high reeds. Here a strange contretemps happened, for which we were quite unprepared; as Stevenson and Ruyter were spooring up the antelopes' slots, two black rhinoceros suddenly made their appearance, and, without the slightest provocation, charged and knocked down Ruyter's horse before he could get out of their way. Stevenson, who was riding close to him, managed to wheel his horse round, scramble on the bank, and discharge both barrels at the assailants just as they were returning to the charge; and Van Jansen and I, who came up at the time, gave them a volley which made them beat a retreat. Both Ruyter and his horse were a good deal shaken by the fall, but no bones were broken, and neither of them were seriously hurt; so, after a mouthful of "schnaps," we agreed to follow up and punish

his assailant. The spoor was plain enough ; and that one was hard hit we could see, as blood had flowed freely as he went along. Still, it was necessary to keep a bright look-out, as a wounded and infuriated borelé is one of the most vindictive and formidable animals a hunter can encounter. As we were following up the spoor of the rhinoceros the two sable antelopes sprang up from behind a bush where they had been lying, and, by a fortunate shot, I hit one of them at the back of the head, and secured a magnificent pair of antlers ; while, almost at the same moment, the two borelé broke out into the plain. Our task was now a comparatively easy one, and, moreover, it afforded considerable fun. They charged us repeatedly, and fairly snorted with rage when they found that they could not get near our horses in the open. At last, after repeated discharges, they succumbed, and we left them as they fell, for their flesh is too tough and bitter to be eatable.

The black rhinoceros are much smaller than the white varieties, and have but comparatively short horns ; but they are much more vicious and pugnacious. The black rhinoceros live upon thorny bushes, and their flesh is bitter and worthless ; whilst the white varieties are essentially grass eaters, and their flesh is succulent and of good flavour. The black rhinoceros is a difficult animal to kill ; besides being extremely tenacious of life, his brain is so small and his skull so thick, that there is very little use firing at his head, unless with hardened bullets driven by a very large charge of powder. The most vulnerable point is just behind the shoulder when the forearm is moved forward ; there the bullet, if fired from a proper angle, is most likely to penetrate the heart or lungs. Unless confronted or annoyed by them, I generally made it a practice to give them a wide berth, as they have no spoils worth taking, and their flesh is useless.

After having disposed of the rhinoceros, even to Buyter's

satisfaction, we continued our route, and as we neared the Linguapo Hills a troop of seven eland were descried. It was determined to drive them towards our camp if possible. Had our party been larger this would have been an easy matter, for a line of horsemen would have guarded each flank and obliged them to head in the direction required; as it was, the task required very careful strategy to ensure success. However, my companions were up to every move on the board in driving game, and they anticipated no difficulty. Stevenson and Van Jansen made a detour so as to get between them and the wooded hills, whilst we rode some distance on their flank so as to start and drive them forward, although without giving them any unnecessary alarm. This was satisfactorily accomplished; and Van Jansen and Stevenson at the same time showing themselves on the other flank, they set off at a rapid pace in the direction in which our camp lay, distant about seven miles. Our object was not to press them, but they went a great pace of their own accord, and kept us going at a smart hand-gallop to keep up with them. After the herd had got over about three miles of ground, they became blown, and relaxed their speed, gradually subsiding into a shuffling trot. We kept them going for a couple of miles further, when they became thoroughly done up, and almost as easy to drive as tame cattle. At last they were so exhausted that they tried to separate: and this was the signal for slaughter, which was dexterously accomplished by Van Jansen and Ruyter shooting them in the back of the head, so as not to spoil the meat. We were now little more than three miles from camp, and Ruyter rode in to bring out a waggon and people to carry in the meat, whilst we broke it up and prepared it for carriage. In about a couple of hours a number of people came out and the beef was carried in, such parts as could not be consumed whilst fresh being converted into "belthorn"—i.e., salted, dried in the sun, and smoked over

wood-ash fires. Prepared in this manner it keeps good for several weeks, and, if well soaked before being cooked, is not at all unpalatable food.

As the country teemed with game of different descriptions, we remained hunting in this neighbourhood for over three weeks, by which time Stevenson and I had accumulated over 2000lb. weight of ivory ; killing in one day, near the Tscharibe Hills, nine elephants to our two guns. At the end of this time, our horses being worn out and quite out of condition, we returned to Notoanis to recruit.

CHAPTER XII.

REMINISCENCES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA.

“ I'll tell you the story ; but pass the ‘ jack,’
And let us make merry to-night, my men.
Ay, those were the days when my beard was black—
I like to remember them now and then.”

It was not long before we organised and started on a fresh expedition. Our camp was situated between two tributaries of the Zambesi, the Longwe and Sepungwe rivers, which rise in the Matopopo range, and flow in a northerly direction through the Matebele country. The party consisted of my old comrades, Captain Stevenson, Hans and Kleine Van Jansen, their brother-in-law Schmidt, and two stalwart Boer farmers, Emile and Yacobus Vandermeir, who were noted elephant hunters. Having left all our heavy gear at Notoanis, Van Jansen's headquarters, we took with us only three lightly laden waggons, containing food supplies and goods for barter; each of us having a couple of salted or seasoned horses for hunting, besides half a dozen dogs of one kind or another, which together formed a numerous, if not a select bobbery pack, that proved most useful in driving animals out of cover, or in engaging their attention and keeping them at bay until the hunters came up.

Game of all kinds was very plentiful in this part of the country, and in two months we had killed more than forty elephants, besides rhinoceros, buffalo, and other animals. One morning two bushmen came in with the account of a large herd of bull elephants having been seen in a somewhat extensive “ vley,” near the River Longwe; and the younger Van Jansen,

Schmidt, and the two Vandermeirs, who happened to be in camp when the news came, immediately started off in pursuit. Stevenson, the elder Van Jansen, and myself were absent at the time, having started at break of day after a large herd of buffalo, of which we killed four, and whilst we were cutting up the meat, a troop of seven giraffes were seen browsing at no great distance. We immediately girthed up our horses and gave chase; after a spurt of quite two miles at a very fair pace, we each singled out one, and, putting on the steam, managed to get alongside, and let drive at the shoulder.

I had selected a fine old bull who seemed to be more massively built than the others, and "Old Stag," my horse, having soon brought me within easy range on his off-side, I planted a two-ounce ball from a Westley-Richard smooth-bore just behind his shoulder, and followed it up with a second shot in very nearly the same place; to my surprise, however, although I heard both bullets crack loudly against his hide, he made no alteration in his gait, and continued to forge ahead much as before. I had to pull up my nag to reload, a proceeding that in those days took some little time, during which the quarry had got a start of about three hundred yards, and I was just commencing a somewhat unpromising stern chase when suddenly the giraffe wheeled round, and came doubling back in my direction at full speed. Being somewhat puzzled at this unexpected stroke of fortune, I rode up just as a large black-maned lion had fastened upon the scared animal's haunches, and was being carried along. Before my horse got wind of the marauder, I let drive a fair double shot at the back of his head, and as I swerved off saw him relax his hold and roll over. My horse now became fidgety, and although he was generally full of courage, on this occasion he seemed to lose his head, and I could not stop him, even by circling round, until I approached Van Jansen and Stevenson, who had each killed his giraffe. I

explained the state of things to them, and having reloaded, we followed up the track of my horse's feet for some distance, when we found the lion dead, and the mighty bull in his last agonies a few hundred yards further on. Having put him out of pain, we rode back to camp, and sent some of our people, and the native following who accompanied the expedition for the sake of the flesh they got, to bring in the lion's spoils, as he was in fine condition, as well as some of the meat. We then heard of the expedition of the rest of the party after elephant, and as they did not put in an appearance at nightfall, we lighted a great fire that might have been seen for some miles round, and fired off guns at intervals during the night to attract their attention to it, in case they had lost their way.

The next morning at peep of day, as none of them had shown up, we inspanned and got under weigh, tracking along their trail, which led towards the Longwe river. After marching until noon, we outspanned at a small "vley," where we hardly found sufficient water for our cattle. Here we resolved to halt for the night, as our Matebele guides assured us that no water was to be found until we arrived at the river, which was still some considerable distance off. Under these circumstances we arranged that Stevenson should take charge of the camp and people, whilst Van Jansen and I, with two of our after-riders carrying supplies, food, and our blankets, should continue to follow up the track of our companions.

We had hardly left the camp an hour when we fell in with Kleine Van Jansen's after-rider galloping along in our direction at full speed, and, to our consternation, he told us that Schmidt and Emile Vandermeir had both been killed that morning by an elephant about half an hour's ride from where we met him. Tearing a leaf out of my note-book, I wrote a line to Stevenson, who had some experience in surgery, to come up with his case of instruments, bandages, and cordials, and despatched it by



THE HUNTER HUNTED.

one of our after-riders ; then, putting spurs to our horses, we made the best of our way towards the scene of the accident. There we found that the tale was too true. Schmidt lay dead, with his blue eyes wide open, his long fair hair besmirched with mud, and the lower part of his face and throat covered with blood, for his chest was stove in ; Emile Vandermeir was trampled into an almost undistinguishable mass, he had scarcely a bone in his body left unbroken. Not seeing either Yacob or the younger Van Jansen, we anticipated further misfortune, but some of the people told us that they had started off on the trail of the elephants a few minutes before we came up. "So must we," replied Van Jansen ; "for unless poor Schmidt is avenged, I shall never be able to look my sister again in the face." Nothing remained to be done, so, remounting our horses, we followed up the trail, and soon came up with Yacob and Kleine, whose horses were dead beat and could hardly move one leg before the other. Seeing their exhausted state, we induced them to go back, and leave the pursuit to us, as our cattle were comparatively fresh.

They gave us the account of the disaster, by which it appeared that soon after day-break they spooed up a herd of fifteen bull elephants, of which they killed three in the open "veldt," and severely wounded two others, who, with the rest, got into a patch of thick cover, full of "*wagt ein bœtje*" thorn, through which it was impossible to force the horses. Kleine Van Jansen and Jacob Vandermeir rode round to the other side of the belt of bush to intercept the herd in case they broke through, whilst Emile and Schmidt dismounted and followed up the spoor of the wounded elephant on foot, which they could distinguish from that of the others by the blood that marked their route. The bush was very dense, somewhat dark, and perfectly impenetrable, except by the track made by the herd, which, however, enabled the pursuers to enter some distance

into the cover. Presently they fell in with an elephant, at which they both fired; at this moment, one of the other wounded elephants, who had cunningly doubled back in a line parallel to the path made by the herd, noiselessly took them in the rear, first killing Schmidt by knocking him down and trampling upon him, and then attacking Emile, who pluckily tried to rescue his comrade, and pounding him piece-meal. He now attacked the two natives, who witnessed the transaction; but they escaped by scrambling up into a tree; he then again returned to Emile Vandermeir's lifeless body, and, screaming with rage, pounded it with his feet and knelt upon it, until it was almost kneaded flat, and the entrails got entwined round his legs. Having vented his spleen on his fallen foe, he rushed off trumpeting through the bush; and his cries of rage were distinctly heard by Kleine Van Jansen and Yacob, although they had no conception of the dismal tragedy that had taken place till an hour or more after it happened, when the herd was found to have vacated the bush, and the bodies were recovered, and carried into the open.

Hans and I had no difficulty in spooring up the herd, for the trail of the wounded animals was plainly distinguishable, as their steps were very irregular in length, and at times they had evidently stopped to rest, from marks of blood and froth which were found on the herbage; a sure sign that they were very sick, and too hard hit to travel far. My conjectures proved to be right; for on approaching another patch of cover, through which the spoor led, we heard noises that convinced us that elephants were not far off. Before commencing operations, I reconnoitred the ground, and found that the bulk of the herd had left their wounded comrades behind, and gone away at speed straight ahead, as their spoor was plainly marked on the plain beyond the cover, where we had heard the suspicious noises. I had a ten-gauge double rifle, and a double two-ounce

smooth-bore, both of Westley-Richard's manufacture ; Hans had his trusty roer, and another of my eight-gauge smooth-bores as a second gun ; besides which two of our pluckiest after-riders were entrusted with other spare guns. All were carefully loaded, and carried heavy charges of powder and hardened projectiles ; so we had no reason to complain of our armament.

As soon as we were ready, we slung our spare guns on our shoulders by the belts, and crept as noiselessly as possible through the bush, halting every few moments to listen to the strange gurgling noises that from time to time struck our ear. We had not penetrated very far into the cover when, whilst I was leading, and stooping almost to the ground, I saw something that at first sight I took to be the trunk of a tree move, and almost immediately, with an unearthly shriek, a splendid tusker, followed by another bull elephant, charged, with his ears expanded like two huge fans, in the direction of one of our after-riders in the rear, who had incautiously showed himself. As he dashed past, within ten yards from the spot where I was crouching, I sprang up, gave a loud shout to attract his attention, and, getting a momentary glance at his temples, rolled him over stone dead with a bullet through the brain. Van Jansen brought the second one to his knees with an admirably planted "dood plek," just behind the shoulder, and we gave him his quietus with a double discharge as he was vainly attempting to get once more upon his feet. That one of these brutes was the destroyer of our friends, I have no doubt, as they had both received several fresh gunshot wounds ; and the one I killed first was evidently a very cunning fellow, as he must have been standing listening to our approach, for some time before he made his charge. We both believed that he was the guilty party, as his knees, as well as his hind feet, were covered with dried clotted blood that could not well have issued from his own wounds, which were in the shoulder and seemingly well planted.



A MURDEROUS PAIR.

Having avenged our comrades' death, we felt as if a weight were lifted off our minds, and returned to the scene of the catastrophe in much better spirits than when we left it. Here we found the waggons had arrived, and two deep graves having been dug side by side on a little eminence, we buried the remains of the two hunters by torch-light, Stevenson reciting such portions of the burial service as he could remember, and improvising a short prayer before the graves were filled up.

The next morning at day-light we tracked on to the river, which we found nearly dried up, except in deep pools; so we continued our course up stream until we came to a "vley," where from the general appearance of the place there seemed every likelihood of our cattle getting some good forage.

Having selected a suitable spot for our camp on a rising ground some two hundred yards away from the river, near some fine shady trees, we held a consultation, and determined to make a halt for some days so as to give our animals a rest. Whilst the people were engaged in constructing an enclosed fence as some safeguard against the carnivora, Stevenson and I strolled down to the river, where we found two deep pools in the bends about half a mile from each other. The one nearest our camp offered every facility for watering our animals, so, after we had filled the casks for our own use, horses, oxen, and dogs came tearing down the slope, and plunged into the pool, where they wallowed for a time in perfect happiness.

Yacob was entirely prostrated with grief at the loss of his brother, from whom he had never been separated, and the Van Jansens were also very much cut up; so I did not care to return to camp, but, shouldering my rifle, strolled to the other pool for the chance of falling in with some kind of game. As I went along the dry bed of the river, I saw several fresh pugs of lions, as well as the spoor of elephant and rhinoceros, and any number of slots of different kinds of antelope. The second

pool was surrounded, except on one side, with reeds and low bush; the water was remarkably clear wherever the banks were steep, but at both ends, which were shallow, the water had assumed the consistency of porridge, from the pounding up of the mud by the trampling of elephants' and rhinoceros' feet. Numberless spoor of both animals crossed and recrossed each other in different directions, and all round the margin of the pool were runs and paths in the reeds made by different kinds of antelope and other wild animals. Some of these marks were evidently quite fresh; so we directed our people to construct a couple of substantial "skarms" or underground ambuscades, sufficiently large to hold two persons comfortably, one at each end of the pool. These were strongly roofed over with stout logs, covered with earth, leaving only a small opening at each end, and, being on the same level as the plain, were scarcely distinguishable from the adjacent ground even in broad daylight. At each end of the pit I had a broad plank fixed so as to form seats upon which we could sit comfortably, with the upper parts of our heads only showing above the surface of the ground; otherwise we should have been obliged to stand during the long hours of the night.

The banks in some places were overshadowed with huge forest trees, amongst which the matundo and two gigantic mowana or boobabs in full foliage, and covered with pendant white flowers, were most conspicuous; whilst in the bends of the river were beds of high canes and reeds, the haunt, not only of numerous gigantic cranes, storks, herons, egrets, and white and black ibis, but also of hideous monsters of alligators and scarcely less repulsive smooth-headed snakes, which glided about half hidden by rushes and strange unnamed weeds. Wherever the water was shallow and somewhat clear of reeds, were patches of beautiful liliaceous plants, with flowers of every shape and hue, over which hung glittering in the sunshine gorgeously

painted giant butterflies, strange metallic-coloured insects, and gauze-winged dragonflies.

In these regions, during the heat of the day a dreamy silence reigns, or rather a strange living, murmuring stillness, which is only felt in tropical forests, and which seems to extend a sense of extreme lassitude and inaction not only over the animal but also the vegetable world; for at this time, when all nature seems hushed, and all living things seek refuge in the shade, the most delicate leaves droop, although completely sheltered by overhanging trees from the direct rays of the sun, and even the flowers for a time cease to disseminate their odours. The mosquitoes and some few of the insect world alone resisted the drowsiness of the hour, and murmured softly as they glided by or buzzed round the thin gauze veil that protected my head and neck.

The uninitiated in woodcraft may talk of the dull uniformity of the forest, but the real lover of Nature knows that the aspect of the woods is ever changing. No one can really appreciate the forest who has not passed whole days in watching it from the early morning hours to the deep dark shades of night. Different animals, birds, insects, and flowers, emerge from their secret hiding-places, and make their appearance at different times. As each hour passes away, the scene assumes a new aspect. The voices of the feathered songsters have their appointed hours, and even the aspect of the foliage and the perfume of the flowers change with the march of the sun.

In the afternoon I returned to our camp for dinner, after which Stevenson and I adjourned to the ambuscades, as the others were in no mood for shooting. Stevenson took the skarm nearest the camp with one of his people, whilst I and my Hot-tentot boy, Hans, went to the further one, which was about a mile beyond. Here we arranged a tarpaulin, mats, and rugs, so as to make our abode pretty habitable; and, having trimmed

the bull's-eye lantern, stowed away the food and cold tea, and looked to the arms, we took up our positions, one at each end of the skarm. My battery consisted of a double 10-bore rifle, and two double 2-ounce smooth-bores, carrying the boluses of the Bishop of Bond Street.

Towards eventide scores of graceful antelope, zebras, and quagga, came and slaked their thirst; and troops of chattering monkeys scrambled down the banks and drank from their small hollow palms, pausing every moment to look round with a wary, suspicious glance to reassure themselves that no scaly denizen of the pool was lurking in their immediate vicinity. Guinea-fowl, partridges, pigeons, doves, palm-birds, and finches of every hue, came unsuspectingly to the water and drank; whilst large flights of fly-catchers kept up a fluttering sound in mid-air, like the zephyrs rustling amongst forest leaves.

There is something peculiarly fascinating in watching the habits and propensities of wild animals in their own haunts, and as long as daylight lasted, having constant visitors, the time passed pleasantly enough. Just as it was getting dusk, two pugnacious keitloa, or black rhinoceros, came close by my skarm, and evidently got my wind, although they could not catch sight of me; for they rushed forward with their noses facing the wind, sniffing and snorting in a most defiant manner; and had I not been waiting for elephant, and feared lest the report of my rifle might scare them away, I could easily have rolled both over, as they presented most tempting broadside shots. Whilst they were looking away from me, I hit one with a clod of earth, in order to drive them off, and, he, thinking his companion had assaulted him, lowered his head, and, catching him unawares, almost rolled him over. After this they left, and a couple of water-buck, one of which had magnificent antlers, took their place in the fore-ground; whilst a large flock of flamingoes, with white bodies and scarlet wings, alighted and

formed up close to the water's edge like a row of soldiers, or rather ballet-dancers, for they had rose-coloured bills and pink legs.

The night soon became dark as pitch; nor moon nor star were visible; mist and wreathing vapours seemed to hang over the dark surface of the water, on which the moaning night-breeze raised a gentle ripple, that gurgled against the shore with a dull, monotonous lap.

As I was peering into the darkness, listening to the unearthly noises that seemed to float on the night air, I stretched forward, leaning against the edge of the pit; when I suddenly felt something clammy and soft moving under my hand. Feeling startled, thinking it was a snake, I sprang backwards with such haste as nearly to smash my skull in against the logs forming the roof of the skarm; and hearing something fall into the pit, I was in a state of mortal funk until, by turning my bull's-eye lantern round, I discovered that the intruder was only a harmless green frog, who, doubtless, was quite as frightened as I was at the *rencontre*. Having dislodged my visitor and thrown him into the pool, I felt considerably relieved, and, taking a long pull at my cold tea, resumed my vigil.

Now and then there was a low rustling amongst the bushes, and distant breathings; but the night was too dark for us to discern anything, although at times dark, shadowy creatures seemed to pass silently in front of us like ghosts in Indian file winding amongst the bush. That their presence was real, however, we knew from the creaking of the reeds as they passed through them, the twittering of startled birds, the flapping of wings, and the quick plunges and splashes in the water, caused by the scared bull-frogs taking to their native element. But there were other creatures than the loud-throated bull-frogs moving in the pool, for at times we could hear great fish or other scaly reptiles swimming slowly round under the bank,



A MIGHTY HUNTER.

and causing the water to ripple in their wake, as they darted in pursuit of their prey.

At times we could hear close at hand the subdued moaning of hyenas, or the dismal howling of jackals; and occasionally a darker shadow of some large animal came suddenly out of the gloom into view, only to disappear in a moment like a phantom, leaving somewhat startling impressions behind upon the imagination. On either side we looked into depths of blackness as unutterably dreary to us as the gloom of the grave. Ever and again we heard, with a nervous bound, a rustling of some creature moving rapidly behind us, while on all sides weird shadows crossed restlessly to and fro.

In these dark hours a dread feeling of helplessness seems to creep over the frame; for the hunter, however experienced he may be in woodcraft, and confident in his aim, at such a time feels that he is powerless—his right hand's cunning is useless—and it needs no ordinary nerve and great self-reliance to keep cool and ready to act on an emergency. At such a time the dread of an unknown danger weighs upon the spirits, and I have felt inclined to relieve my lungs by a lusty shout to assure myself that the shadows that appeared to float before me were not imaginary, and creations of a diseased brain.

On this occasion there was no room to doubt, for hoarse deep whimpers came booming through the darkness, which I knew denoted the presence of lions, even had I not heard them lapping the water, and breathing heavily as they paused now and again between their draughts to draw breath. Breathlessly I gazed into the darkness or bent forward with one ear turned towards the earth in the direction of the ominous sounds.

Before night drew in, I took the precaution to close up the other end of the skarm, as my henchman, Hans, although really a plucky and devoted fellow, was an incorrigible sleeper, and no danger or excitement could ever keep him awake; moreover, I had

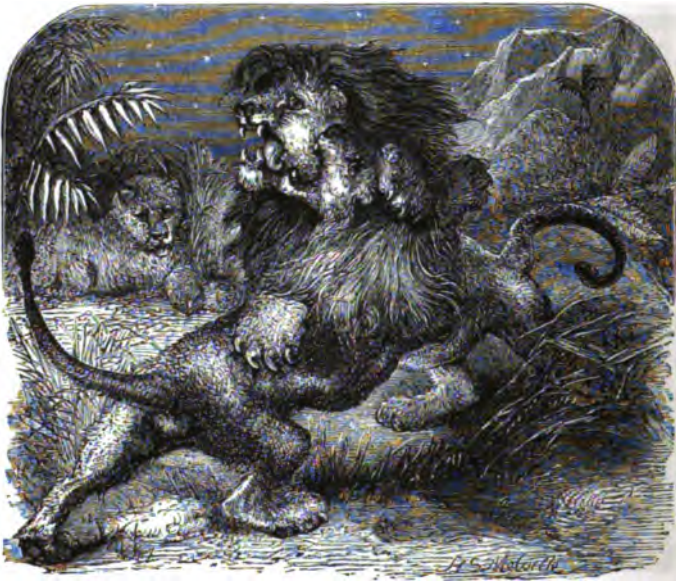
to kick him repeatedly to prevent him snoring loud enough to be heard fifty yards off on a still night. I had just stooped below to administer a gentle reminder of this kind, and pull up the wick of my bull's-eye lantern, when, as I returned to the opening, and was about to reseal myself, a loud "wh'uff," "wh'uff" was heard just overhead, followed by the heavy breathing of some animal that was clawing the ground and sniffing close to the other entrance of the skarm. I gently cocked both guns, rested one noiselessly against the corner of the pit, and had just peered over the outside edge, when I was greeted by another "wh'uff," followed by a low sulky growl in the opposite direction, and then I knew that my footsteps had been tracked up to my retreat by a troop of lions, who were only waiting for my appearance to commence hostilities.

Although I felt my heart thump against my ribs, and my pulse quicken with excitement, I determined to take the initiative, and at that moment, catching sight of a pair of greenish fire-like orbs shining in the dark, scarcely four yards from me, aiming right between them, I fired both barrels almost simultaneously. With a mighty bound the lion sprang many feet over my head, and began rolling over and over, evidently hard hit and very sick. The moment I fired, I stooped, so as to get hold of my second gun; an action perhaps, that saved me from a mauling, as the lioness rushed forward at the cry of her mate, and I almost blew her head to pieces by a double snap shot aimed at her eyes, that glowed like red-hot coals, as she stood whimpering over his writhing body. I do not think she was more than three feet from the muzzle of my gun when I fired, as what remained of her face was all singed and blackened when I found her in the morning.

Hans was now all awake, and slipped my rifle in my hand directly the other was discharged, but I kept my last two shots in reserve until I had reloaded the other guns, notwithstanding

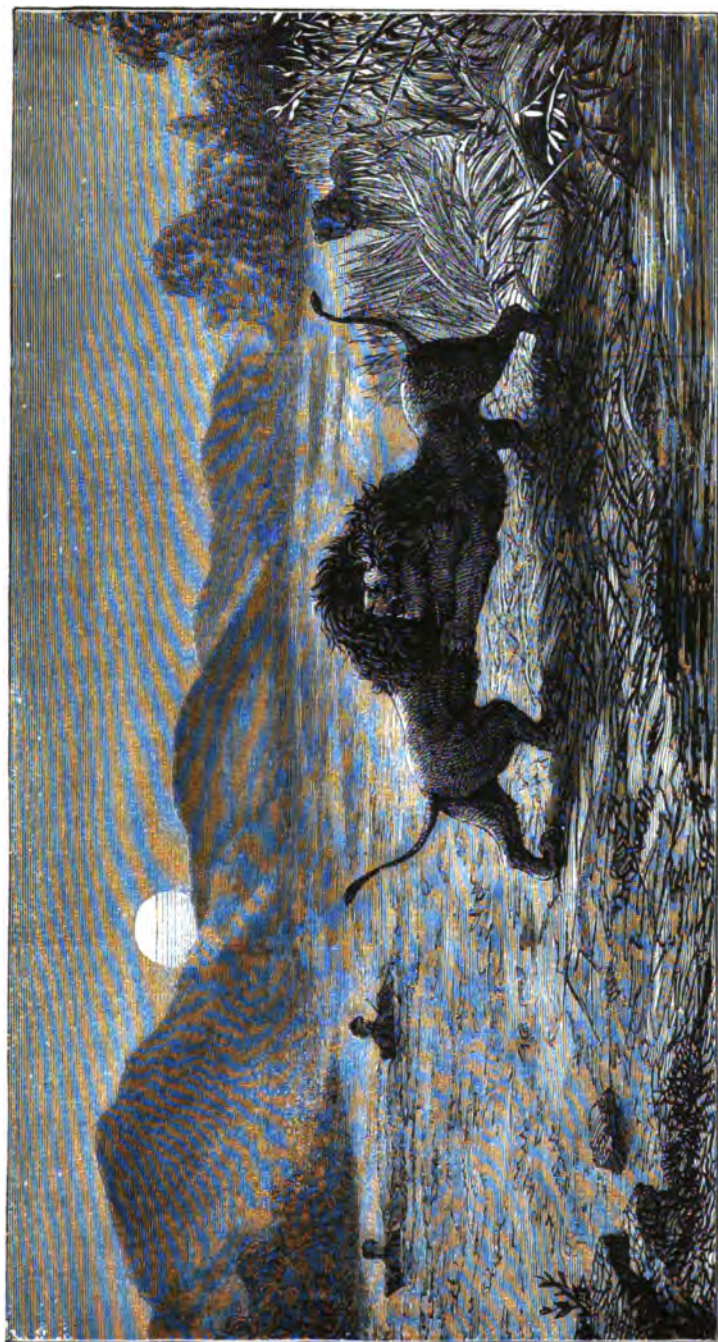
a constant moaning, varied by angry snarls, which told me that the game was not yet over.

It was too dark to discover anything, although the moon was just beginning to rise, and as my antagonists could see in the dark, whilst I could not, I thought discretion was the better part of valour ; so I fastened the tarpaulin down over the



A DUEL.

entrance of the skarm, and lay down on my rug to wait until the moon gave me sufficient light to resume offensive or defensive operations. In spite of my efforts to keep awake, I must have dozed off and slept for some time, for I was roused up by the Tottie, evidently in a state of great alarm, who bade me listen. Pulling myself together, I caught hold of my rifle, and gently raised the tarpaulin, when I found the moon's rays were making the night clear as day. The lioness lay dead close to the skarm ; but the lion had managed to crawl away to the water,



LION SHOOTING BY MOONLIGHT.

where he was surrounded by two other troops, one consisting of three, and the other of four, whom he kept at bay by repeated snarling and threatening growlings.

Now and again the leader of one or the other troop would give a roar of defiance, which was at once replied to by his rival; and at times they would couch down, as if to make a spring, and tear up the earth with their claws. They were evidently so engrossed with each other's presence that my ambuscade did not attract any attention; so watching my opportunity, I levelled my rifle, hit one leader of a troop hard just behind the shoulder, and gave the other one the contents of the second barrel in the same place, as near as I could judge. Shooting by moonlight is very uncertain work, even at short ranges; so I was not much surprised that neither fell, but, rushing madly at each other, were soon locked in mortal combat. I reloaded my rifle, and dropped my first antagonist, the old lion, with a bullet in the back of the head; and with the second barrel tumbled over a lioness, who was looking inquisitively in my direction in a manner that boded me no good. Picking herself up, she was couching for a spring in my direction; but I ended her career with a right and left in the chest, when she rolled upon her back, and, after pawing the air for about half a minute, lay motionless. The two lions were still at it tooth and nail; so I reloaded and let drive four shots at them as they were locked in each other's arms, and although I heard the heavy bullets crack against their flanks, neither fell, and before I could again reload, they made off into the bush.

At this moment I heard some heavy and continuous firing from the direction of Stevenson's post, and a few minutes afterwards a troop of about a dozen bull elephants came tearing down along the water-side, their white tusks gleaming in the bright moonlight. As they got near the dead lion, they must have winded the blood, for they turned off sharp in my direc-

tion. Picking the biggest tuskers, I gave them the contents of all six barrels, at ranges varying from fifteen to forty paces ; and had the satisfaction of seeing one drop in his tracks, and another tumble about in the reeds as if he could not rise from his knees and regain his legs. As soon as my arms were reloaded, I scrambled out of the pit, bounded over the dead lioness, who gave a "squelsh" as I trod on her side, which somewhat scared me, and after four more shots I managed to put the wounded elephant out of his pain and secure the ivory.

As soon as I had reloaded, I ventured to look round at my night's work, which consisted of a lion, two lionesses, and two bull elephants, all of which were lying within two hundred yards of each other. I now felt dog-tired, so once more crawled into my skarm, closed up the entrance, rolled myself up in my rugs, and slept until broad daylight, when I was awakened by Stevenson, who had also been lucky, having killed an immense bull elephant and three white rhinoceros. Later on in the day we spoores up the wounded lions, and found one dead, and the other so weak that he could not get away from the dogs ; so we gave him a quietus, which ended his pain. Hans Van Jansen killed three fine bull elephants the next evening, and in less than a fortnight we got about twelve hundredweight of ivory amongst us ; but we began to lose our horses by the tsetse fly and were obliged to commence a retrograde movement for Notoanis.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GAME OF ABYSSINIA.

IN Abyssinia, like every other mountainous country, the game is extremely varied, the same species of animal being rarely found both in the high lands and in the low country. All around Annesley Bay and on the low ground extending from the sea to the spurs of the table land, vegetation is extremely scanty, consisting chiefly of mangrove, stunted bramble bushes, different species of the mimosa and other tropical plants requiring but little water. Here, in the dry season, elephants and the feline race are rarely to be met with; but to my surprise I found other game abundant, and on this sandy tract, where both water and cover was scarce, I killed wild boar, antelope, Ben Israel gazelle, bustard, guinea fowl, floraken, spur-fowl, sand grouse, rock pigeon, and three different kinds of francolin, whilst the nights were made horrid by the constant yelling of packs of jackals, varied only by the more unearthly cry of the spotted hyena. During the rains and for some time afterwards, when the country is green and water is to be found, herds of elephants make their way from the forests in the interior, and have been seen grazing on the young herbage close to the sea shore. I saw old spoor on several occasions, but never had the luck to come across any myself, although some were killed by officers who were quartered in the low country. I only once saw a lion in this part of Abyssinia, and our meeting took place under the following circumstances :

On my arrival at Zoula in October the heat was intense, and as camp-life was almost unbearable on account of dust-storms or the clouds of fine sand that were being continually raised by the wind, and at times darkened the air, I established my head-quarters on board H. M. S. Coromandel, and in company with her gallant commander, Hewitt, and his officers, made several very jolly shooting excursions to different parts of the coast.

One day, in an unguarded moment, I accepted an invitation from the Bunda-master, or custodian of the pier, then in progress of construction, to accompany him and a party of friends in a shooting excursion to the head of the bay. Our host, although a first-rate officer and a very good fellow, was but a miserable caterer for a shekar-party, for he never thought of the necessities of the inner man or creature comforts, and we actually embarked at 5 A. M., without breakfast, and a clear hold. There was not even so much as a keg of water in the boat. These arrangements not appearing good enough for this child, he tried to back out of the excursion, and it was only on his urgent representation that he would not start upon an empty stomach, that a Bologna sausage, with some biscuit and beer, was procured from one of the ships, and divided amongst us. A cask of water was then put in the boat, and we started for the hot-water springs of Atz-fat. Although this place is scarcely eight miles from Zoula, our lascars took nearly four hours pulling the distance; so that the sun was high over our heads by the time we got to our shooting ground, and our chances of finding game were very small.

Besides our host, my *compagnons de voyage* were two officers of the Bombay Marine, and a "foreign party," who informed us that he was a great "yager" in his own country, and "*un tireur de première force*;" although by his style and get-up I should have taken him to be a converted missionary, who had a call, or

indeed anything else but a sportsman. His gun—which he handled as a monkey does a hot ciuder—was evidently brand new, and might perhaps in Liège have cost fifteen francs, but it scarcely looked safe to fire, of which fact I made him aware, to his intense mortification.

As the lascars were pulling lazily along the shore, we caught sight of an antelope browsing amongst some low bush, and landing between two patches of mangrove, an attempt was made to stalk it, but without success—we could not get within shot. It was then resolved to beat some likely looking ground, and make our way towards one of the ravines in the Eidalle mountains, which range runs parallel to the coast ; and so we started, the “yager” remaining behind to prove his gun by tying it to a tree, and pulling the trigger with a long cord.

My companions were perfect novices, and I soon gave up all hopes of making a bag ; for when I tried to persuade them to keep in line, they got it into their heads that I wanted to come the “old soldier” over them, and practise “drill manœuvres,” and they coolly told me that, although such kind of shooting might do for marines, it did not suit blue jackets. Finding myself in the minority, and feeling somewhat disgusted, I resolved to part company with the greenhorns, and was striking out a line of my own, when a couple of spur-fowl getting up from close under my feet, I brought them down right and left. Hardly had the report died away when I heard a low growl, and one of the lascars, who was carrying my rifle, yelling out Bagh ! Bagh ! (Tiger ! Tiger !) shot past me like a skyrocket. A slight rustle in the brushwood followed, and in a moment more I saw a fine young lion looking deliberately at me from over a bush, about twenty paces distant.

He had no mane, and at first sight, little more than his head and neck were visible. I thought he was a lioness, but as he

bounded away I got a better view, and made him out to be a fine grown three year old lion. I had no time to reload before he bolted, and the lascar, thinking discretion was the better part of valour, and making himself scarce, I could not get a shot. I was trying to find consolation by an examination of the pugs, when a double discharge took place in my rear, and a sharp tingling on my western side told me that some one had been making game of me. Luckily I had on one of Bird's leather shooting-coats, so the shots did not enter the flesh but—

‘ When in trouble to be troubled
Is to have your trouble doubled.’

With a roar that would have scared many a bolder sportsman than our yager, for he was the delinquent, I rushed forward in the direction the report came from, and saw that individual diving through the bushes as if old Nick was behind him. He had taken me for a bear!

There is art even in running away. The “skedaddler” requires coolness and presence of mind, or he will come to grief.

Besides having to look back to mark the movements of his foe, he must look forward and choose his ground, taking care not to fall, or woe betide him. A heavy crash in the bottom of a thickly wooded watercourse told me that the yager was for a time *hors de combat*, so I contented myself by advising him “to shoot me dead next time he fired at me, for if I was only wounded I would return the compliment with the contents of both barrels.” Not hearing any reply I continued tracking up the trail of the lion until I fell in with the Bunda-master, and we made our way to the hot-water springs, near which we found the old spoor of a herd of elephants, but only killed a couple of hares and a few spur-fowl.

Finding game scarce we made our way back to the boat, and would have returned on board in time for dinner, but the yager

did not put in an appearance, and after waiting three or four hours we had to go in search of him.

After some time he made his appearance, and with great glee told us that he had killed "two vild camels." His information was soon afterwards corroborated by a party of Shohos, who came to complain that two of the government camels had been killed by one of our number. This was above a joke, and I launched out in anything but parliamentary language to the unfortunate "yager," but all to no purpose; he said: "There vere vild elephants, and vy not vild camels too?" "I was jealous of his 'superior shooting,' forsooth." Cutting the matter short by threatening to punch his head if he did not hold his tongue, I waded into the boat, the salt water making my shot wounds smart, which in no way improved my temper, and I growled and grumbled all the way back like a bear with a sore head.

Arriving on board the *Coromandel* at about 10 p.m., Hewitt gave me a capital dinner, and after a time I could afford to laugh at my miseries, but I registered a vow that I would never run in such company again—and, reader, I intend to stick to it.

This was the only time I came across a lion in Abyssinia, and, although I beat all the country round about the hot-springs of Ailet, where they were numerous in the time of Mansfield Parkyns, I never even found a fresh pug. Indeed, there could have been none in the neighbourhood for some time, or the people would have taken care of their cattle, which wandered about the bush without molestation. In the passes above Ailet I killed a black panther, and a young leopard near Amba Saul; but as these were the only ones I saw during the seven months I was in this part of the world, I do not think feline animals are very numerous. During the seven months I was in Abyssinia, however, I killed over two thousand head of game;

which was not bad sport considering that our route to Magdala lay chiefly along the water-shed, where animals are far less numerous than in the more densely-wooded districts.

In some places I have seen guinea-fowl in flocks of several hundred; by getting some of my people to drive them slowly towards me, I have killed as many as a dozen at a double discharge, and by keeping concealed, have bagged a mule load in a few minutes. On the high land near Lake Ashangi and Mussageeta, grey and Egyptian geese, different kinds of duck and teal, were very numerous, and, as their flesh, though tough, was a change to our ration beef, I went in for heavy bags of water-fowl. My best day's work was thirty-seven brace of geese, and five couple of mallard, shovel-bills, and teal. With the exception of a few elephants and leopards killed in the low country, very little large game was seen, although we had some of the best sportsmen of India with the force; and from what I saw of the country, and the information I could gather from the people, I do not consider that the eastern shores of Abyssinia are desirable hunting grounds.

As to the people, the less said about them the better, "for manners have they none, their customs are beastly, and their company is undesirable."

CHAPTER XIV.

SPORT IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

PERHAPS there are few districts more celebrated in the annals of sport than the Rocky Mountains, and the vast prairies of Wyoming and Montana that skirt the western base of the range. Now that the network of railways has not only extended right across the continent, but its numerous branches and ramifications intersect the country in all directions, it is an easy matter comparatively speaking, for the sportsman to transport himself and his gear in the greatest comfort to the very heart of these famous hunting grounds. As nearly three hundred thousand people go annually to the United States, the great competition engendered has so systematised and regulated the arrangements incident to the voyage that little or no discomfort is experienced in any of the immense steamers that make the transit in about ten days, vessels in which passengers have at their command all the luxuries and conveniences of a first-class hotel. From New York to Chicago, on Lake Michigan, a distance of about 900 miles, the traveller has the choice of four lines of rail ; the passenger express trains of which accomplish the journey in a little over 30 hours, all the *through* trains being provided with drawing-room and sleeping cars.

First, the "New York Central" route. The lines comprising this route are the New York Central and Hudson River Railway to Buffalo ; thence by way of Cleveland and the Lake Shore, or, by way of Detroit, the Great Western Railway of Canada, and the Michigan Central Railway, to Chicago. As the railway



MONTANA MINERS.

winds along the valley of the Hudson, some of the finest river scenery in America is to be seen by this route.

The second, the "Erie" route, is much resorted to as the most direct route between New York and Buffalo, and as affording views of the singularly beautiful scenery in the region of the Catskills and farther Alleghanies, and of the picturesque slopes drained by the head waters of the Delaware and Susquehanna rivers. Just before reaching Buffalo, the traveller may take the Atlantic or Great Western Railway for Cincinnati or St. Louis, and the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway for Chicago; or, by Niagara, the Great Western Railway of Canada for Detroit, and thence by the Michigan Central Railway to Chicago.

The third is the "Pennsylvania" route; which passes through Philadelphia and Pittsburg, crosses the successive ranges of the Alleghany Mountains, and has branch lines connecting it with Cincinnati and St. Louis.

The fourth is the "Baltimore and Ohio" route. By this the traveller bound for the West goes by the Pennsylvania Railroad to Philadelphia; thence to Baltimore, and through Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia to Parkersburg on the Ohio; and finally *via* Cincinnati to Chicago.

We now enter upon the second stage of our journey—that from Chicago to Omaha—and here we again have the choice of three routes by which to reach the Union Pacific Railway at Council Bluffs, which is on the east bank of the Missouri river opposite Omaha. These routes are the "North Western," the "Burlington and Quincy," and the "Rock Island;" all of which run in almost parallel lines across the States of Illinois and Iowa, and convey their passengers to their common terminus with equal comfort and in about the same time.

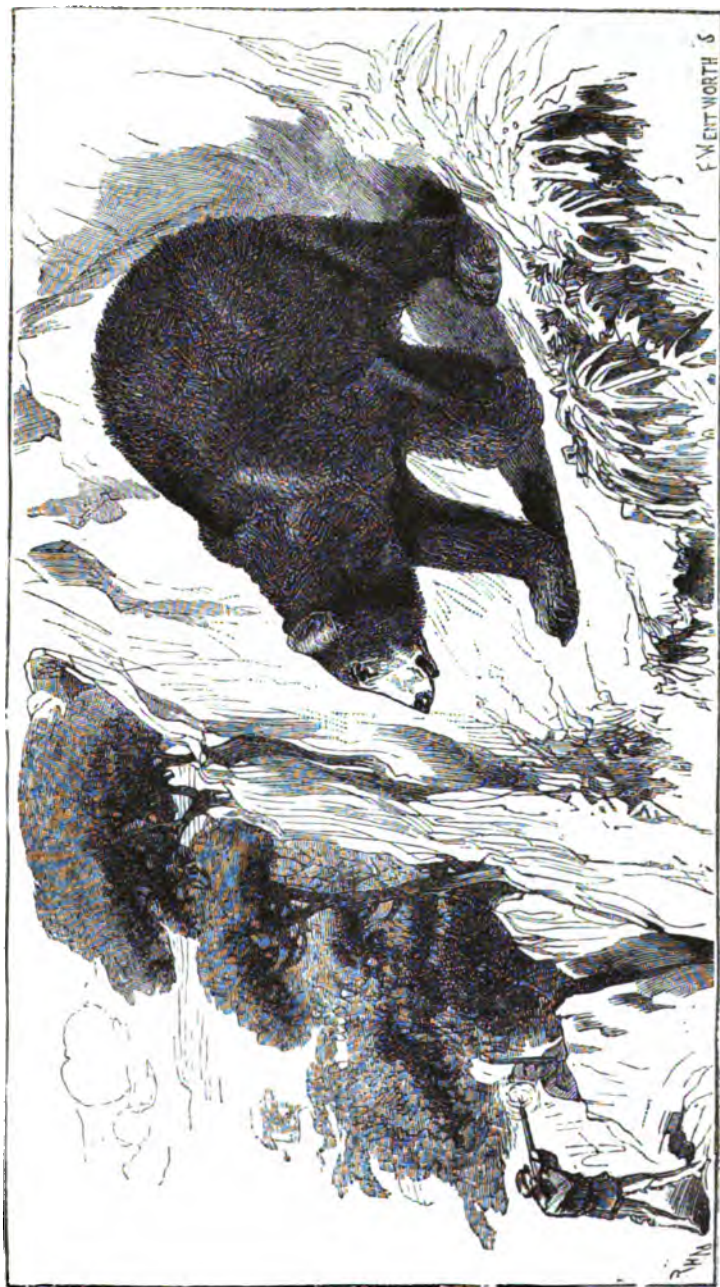
We now commence the third section of our route, from Omaha to Laramie by the Union Pacific line, on which only



HALF-BREED INDIAN HUNTER.

one train leaves daily, running through to the Pacific. Passing the Elkhorn river at Fremont, we catch our first view of the Platte river, along the banks of which the line runs as far as North Platte, crossing the whole length of the immense grazing fields of Nebraska, which one day will become one of the finest corn-growing districts in the world, as the soil is of inexhaustible fertility. At Antelope, 450 miles west of Omaha, we have our first view of the Rocky Mountains, whose snow-capped peaks rise high against the clear blue sky; and at Cheyenne, the junction of the Denver Pacific Railway, we enter the State of Wyoming, which, before the line of rail was completed, was once a famous sporting district. Leaving Cheyenne, we at once begin to ascend the slope of the Rocky Mountains by a steep gradient, and at Granite Canon, twenty miles from Cheyenne, we are some seven thousand feet above sea-level. We continue to rise until we reach Sherman, which has an elevation of 8,224 feet, and is the highest portion of the line. From Sherman to Laramie, the train runs without steam down the incline, which has a gradient of forty-seven feet and a half per mile, under the control of the air-break; and here our long but pleasant railroad journey terminates. Notwithstanding the enormous extent of country traversed, such is the comfort of the Pullman sleeping-cars, and the excellent arrangements of the hotel or victualling department, that little or no fatigue is experienced even in the longest transits. There is a good fire at both ends of the drawing-room car, ensuring warmth in the coldest weather, whilst double doors and double windows exclude draughts of air. The sleeping-cars have comfortable beds, washing places, and every convenience, and the traveller can always recruit his spirits at the restaurant and bar.

Fort Laramie is now a growing place, and may one day become a thriving city, as it is at the entrance of the Laramie Plain, a well watered and fertile tract, which in a few years



STALKING A GRIZZLY.

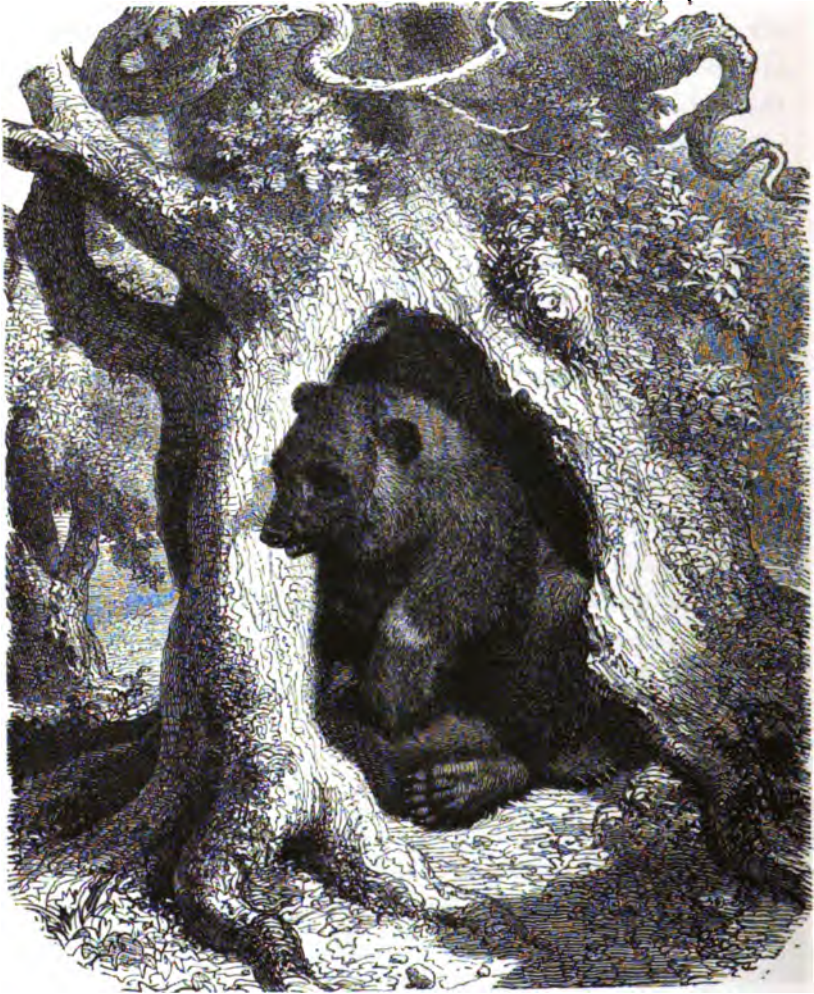
will be covered with homesteads ; but when I and my party visited the district some years ago, it consisted of a stockaded enclosure on a rising ground, on the left bank of the Laramie river, in which was a barrack containing three companies of infantry and some fifty light-horse. Two or three settlers' drinking-booths, and a cluster of Sioux lodges, were pitched under the walls ; and an encampment of miners, who were going prospecting for gold, lay on the opposite side of the river. Now, I hear, Laramie possesses excellent hotel accommodation, and stores where most necessaries can be obtained. Here the party of sportsmen must halt for some days to buy horses, baggage, mules, and travelling gear ; for they must now provide themselves with all they require for the road. Presuming that they have brought their arms, ammunition, saddlery, camp equipments, and medicine chests with them, they will not experience much difficulty in obtaining all else they require ; and the government authorities will assist them in procuring trustworthy guides and servants. If they are lucky, they may also be able to engage a couple of half-breed hunters, who know all the surrounding country, and can furnish much valuable information about the haunts of the different kinds of game. Perhaps the best line to follow would be the Medicine Bow Creek, as far as the confluence of the Sweet-water river ; thence continuing the route up stream to the Wind River Mountains. Fine sport may be obtained all along that range, and amongst the many tributaries of the Big-horn river, which flows in a northerly direction until it falls into the Yellowstone branch of the Missouri.

The principal large game likely to be met with will be the grizzly and black bear, the buffalo or bison, the wapiti, karjacow, and white and black tailed deer ; the prong-horn antelope, the big-horn or mountain sheep, the grey and prairie wolves, the jackass hare, the sage rabbit, and the beaver ; the wild

turkey, mountain grouse, sage hens, several kinds of water-fowl, and snipe.

There are two species of the bear tribe to be found in and about the Rocky Mountains, namely, the black bear or musquaw, of which the cinnamon bear is only a variety, and the far-famed grizzly. The black bear, which is also common in most of the large American forests and the adjacent sparsely populated districts, is about six feet four inches in length, and stands about three feet and a half at the shoulder. He is covered with a smooth close-set coat of thick hair, which varies from dark brown to glossy black, according to the age of the animal and the season of the year. When the coat is quite black, there is always a cinnamon-coloured patch on the muzzle and a crescent or horse-shoe shaped mark on the breast. The average weight of a full-grown black bear is about 300 lbs.; although I have heard of some specimens being killed at the fall of the year, when, laden with fat previous to hibernating, that were said to have weighed over 500 lbs. Bears are all great wanderers, and travel over a vast extent of ground in search of food, being anything but dainty; and although as a rule they prefer vegetable to animal diet, a stray pig or a sheep never comes amiss, and when very hard pressed, even snails and wood-lice are eaten. Their great weakness, however, is for honey, and their olfactories are so keenly developed that they can detect the smell of a bees' nest at a long distance; notwithstanding that the combs may be hidden away in the hollow of some high tree, with the aid of their sharp claws they will swarm up the trunk, work away with their teeth, and gnaw away the wood, until they have made a hole of sufficient size to get in their paws; when, regardless of the bees' stings, they will scoop out the combs and devour the whole mass. The musquaw hibernates at the fall of the year, just before the cold weather sets in, and at this time he is especially fat, beech-

mast, blueberries, and other wild fruits being extremely plentiful in the forest at this season. The decayed trunk of a pine is



WINTER QUARTERS.

often selected for hibernating, but if such is not procurable, a dry cave, or a hole underneath a shelving rock, is scraped out until it forms a comfortable winter retreat. There, accompanied

by his partner, he turns in for the winter months, and sleeps with his fore paws curled round his eyes, and his muzzle



IN LUCK.

imbedded in the fur of his chest, until the comparatively mild weather of March or April sets in. About the end of February, the female generally gives birth to two cubs, which, when first born, are scarcely as large as Newfoundland puppies of the

same age, and she manages to nourish them without taking any food herself until the warm weather sets in. No doubt the fat with which the body is loaded in autumn maintains the animal heat, and thus, until it becomes absorbed, they are enabled to exist during this winter fast of four months.

The grizzly bear (*Ursus ferox*) is by far the largest and most formidable of his race, and his tremendous strength and wonderful tenacity of life makes him one of the most dangerous antagonists a hunter can meet with. From nose to rump, a full-grown grizzly measures about eight feet; he stands about fifty-two inches at the shoulder, and often weighs 800 lbs. He has a broad and somewhat flattened forehead, and a long narrow muzzle with large powerful canine teeth. His ears are small and rounded, and his tail is so short that it is completely concealed by the surrounding hair on the flanks. The grizzly varies much in colour. When he is young, he has a rich brown fur, often very long and close, and of much finer texture than the adult animal. Generally his coat is of a dullish brown, freckled over with steely grey hairs, which gives a somewhat grizzly appearance to the surface of the fur. "Old Ephraim," as the male grizzly is commonly called by the Rocky Mountain trappers, has wonderful feet, measuring about eighteen inches in length, broad in proportion, and armed with sharp and strongly made claws about five inches long, which he can use separately like fingers. These, besides serving as terrific weapons of defence, enable him to dig for roots, climb trees, or make holes; it being his general practice, after he has made a meal upon any animal he may have killed, to bury the remains, so as to protect them from the wolves and coyotes, until he again feels hungry.

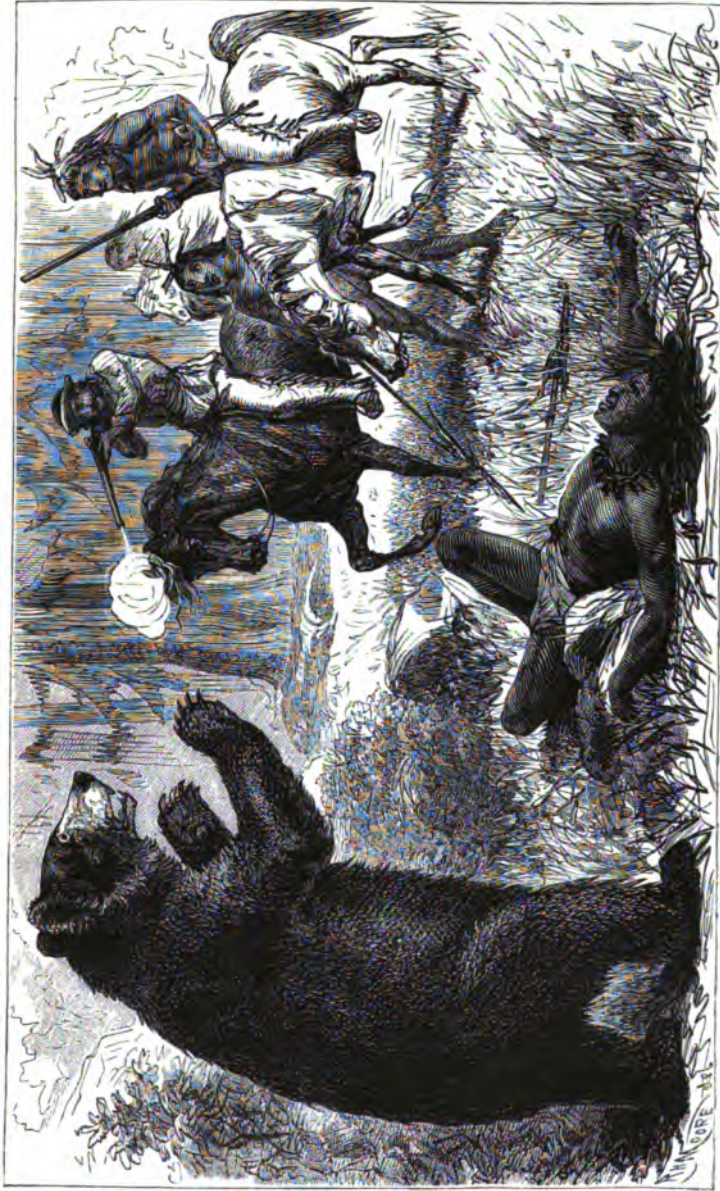
The grizzly is perhaps the most powerful of the carnivorous animals, as I have seen him when disturbed, carry off a caracow deer as easily as a dog would a hare; and the Indian hunters

say that they have known him to kill a buffalo on the prairie, and carry it entire to a patch of cover two miles distant. Mr. Dougherty, who has hunted in the prairies east of the Rocky Mountains, relates an extraordinary instance of the amazing strength of a grizzly. He had shot a bull bison and, having marked the spot, set off for the purpose of getting assistance to skin it and carry back the meat. "When he returned with his party, however, the bison was gone. Being quite sure that the bison was dead, he set about searching for the carcass, and presently found it at a considerable distance buried in a pit; and that the pit had been scratched out, and the dead bison conveyed thither by a grizzly bear, was evident from the spoor plainly indented in the moist earth." Considering that a bull bison, if in fair condition, exceeds 1000 lbs. dead weight, the strength of a full-grown grizzly must exceed that of any of the feline race. Luckily for the hunter, they cannot spring upon their prey; and notwithstanding that these heavy, thick-set, awkward-looking animals possess wonderful mobility of limb and great proportional agility, they are not such very dangerous customers to tackle, provided the hunter is armed with a large-bore breech-loading rifle throwing a heavy bullet, and keeps his wits about him. The American hunters are generally armed with small-bore rifles, which are as much out of place against such an assailant as they would be against elephants or rhinoceros; and I attribute the numerous accidents that have occurred in hunting the grizzly to the insufficiency of weight in the projectiles generally used. The most vital spots to aim at are the temples, just under the throat when the head is raised, the horse-shoe-shaped curl upon the chest, or behind the shoulder just clear of the fore-arm and shoulder-blade. It is a somewhat grotesque sight to see one of these huge monsters sitting upon his hind legs, with his small, cunning, pig-like, brown eyes sparkling maliciously, as he catches sight of the

approaching hunter. Should he not be shot through the brain or heart, unless his assailant maintains his presence of mind, and puts in his second barrel well and quickly, the chances are that the latter will come to grief, if his comrades fail to come to the rescue; as "Old Ephraim," when wounded, becomes desperate, and strikes tremendous rending blows with his fore-paws, generally aiming at the face of his antagonist. In one instance an Indian was completely scalped, the skull being laid bare and the hair turned right over the face by a single blow from the paw of a grizzly.

My own experience leads me to believe that the grizzly, like every other forest animal, will rarely interfere with man unless he is either molested or pressed by hunger, as those which I stalked and killed in the Montana district never attempted to molest me until wounded. In fact, on two occasions, after watching our approach most attentively for some time, they turned round and attempted to shuffle off. The following instance however, shows that they sometimes assume the initiative, and, when hungry, will attack either horses or men.

We were encamped on the Wind River, a considerable stream that takes its source in the Rocky Mountains to the north-east of Fremont's Peak, and flows into the Big-horn River, a tributary of the Yellowstone; when at day-break one dreary morning a cry of alarm rang through the camp, and I was awake by our people hurrying to and fro in noisy confusion. As some of our scouts had recently seen "Indian sign," and rumours were prevalent of predatory bands of Pawnees, Sioux, Arapahos, and Cheyennes, being out on the war-path, I made sure that the hostile redskins were out, and trying to stampede our horses and mules. I need not say that my toilet that morning did not take long, and just as I had looked to my rifle and mounted, a couple of smothered shots were heard on the outskirts of the camp, followed by loud cries and desultory firing



A GRIZZLY BROUGHT TO BAY.

The rain was falling in torrents, and the river and hills were more or less obscured in mist, and looked dark and gloomy, so that a long ride after redskins before breakfast in such weather was anything but a pleasing prospect. However, there was no help for it, so I rode forward towards the clump of red cedars from whence the sound of fire-arms seemed to issue. As I drew near, one of the half-breeds came running back and informed me that the row was occasioned by a grizzly, who had tried to carry off one of the baggage ponies, but that he had been driven off by the guard, who had fired at him, and that in revenge he had carried off an Indian boy who had charge of the dogs. Guided by the shouting which still continued, and accompanied by Pierre carrying a second gun, I entered the copse, and found a big grizzly evidently the master of the situation; for although three or four of our Blackfoot scouts were holloaing round him, he did not appear to notice their menaces, but confined his attentions to Crib, a bull-terrier, which pluckily kept him at bay by dancing about all round him, without risking a mauling by getting within striking reach of his paws. I was mounted on a thoroughly broken Indian mustang, that neither feared buffalo nor grizzly, and I rode pretty close up before I saw that the Indian boy was lying on the ground apparently so badly hurt as to be insensible, whilst the faithful old dog was doing what he could to protect him by harassing his huge antagonist.

On my riding up to about twenty yards' distance, "Old Ephraim" raised himself on his hind legs, and cocked his head knowingly on one side, as if he was going to make a rush; whilst he was in this attitude, his brawny chest being fully exposed, I gave him the contents of both barrels almost simultaneously, which rolled him over on his back, where he made several convulsive motions with his paws, as if he was catching flies; so, dismounting, I took my second gun from Pierre, and ad-



A SNACK IN THE FOREST.

ministered a *coup de grâce* behind the ear, when with a peculiarly melancholy whining moan he stretched out his great limbs and breathed his last. The game being ended, I turned round to look after the wounded boy, but to my surprise he was *non est*; he afterwards told me that, finding himself encircled by the paws of the grizzly, he had closed his eyes, and feigned to be dead, and that when the brute dropped him upon being fired at by some of the people, he had not dared to move lest he should again get hold of him. My plucky dog, it appears, had twice endeavoured to pin "Old Ephraim" by the nose whilst the boy was in his clutches, and without doubt it was his persistent attacks that compelled the monster to release his hold. The youngster, thanks to the dog's aid and his own presence of mind, was not seriously injured; although he had received several nasty cuts in the back and ribs from the bear's claws, but these soon got well under Le Messurier's treatment. Many and many a spirit-stirring yarn have I heard related round the watch-fire by different hunters, of their perilous encounters with the much dreaded grizzly; but one bear story is so like another that I shall desist from relating them, and only observe that, from my own experience, I should always give "Old Ephraim" a wide berth if I was not armed with a thoroughly serviceable breach-loading rifle throwing a heavy bullet.

CHAPTER XV.

BUFFALO HUNTING.

WHEN the early Spanish explorers, forming a part of De Soto's party, left the Atlantic seaboard and penetrated the great central prairies West of the Mississippi, they beheld for the first time countless multitudes of bison that covered the face of the plains; and they forthwith called the district "the land of wild cows." Although naturalists have clearly demonstrated that these animals are of the genus bison, in the old days they were dubbed buffalo, and by this name they are still generally known.

The true home of the buffalo is the great prairie region between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains, the forests of Texas, and the Saskatchewan river; although the numerous bleached and whitened bones found in different districts seem to show that in former days herds of these noble beasts reached the shores both of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The periodical migrations of the buffalo in the present day may be said to extend from the Gulf of Mexico on the south to 62° north latitude, and from Kentucky and Indiana on the east to the dark gorges of the Rocky Mountains. At certain seasons of the year a mighty impulse seems at once to seize upon countless thousands of these animals, and they surge backwards and forwards—heading north or south—moving along as the waves of the ocean driven by the wind.

“ Reasoning at every step he treads
Man yet mistakes his way ;
While meaner things, whom instinct leads,
Are rarely known to stray.”

No physical obstacles stay them on their march ; great rivers with overhanging banks and shifting sands, are swum or forded ; deep chasms and earth-rent gulches are crossed ; but still the horde moves on, night and day, like a resistless tide. Hunters may thin their numbers, and prairie-wolves cut off stragglers and such as from fatigue cannot keep up with the herd ; still the van keeps on moving in the one direction, and countless thousands of dusky monsters pass *en masse*, like a cloud, over the land.

The home of the buffalo—the much vaunted region of the *Far West*—consists of great undulating wastes of coarse rank grass, occasionally interspersed with fertile verdant spots and patches of stunted forest, and watered by the tributaries of the Missouri, the Arkansas, the grand Canadian, and the Red rivers. The illimitable extent of these eternal and monotonously dreary plains at first sight impresses one with an overwhelming sense of awe by their extreme vastness ; but the beauty of the scenery has been greatly over-rated and exaggerated, whilst the difficulties of travelling are much enhanced by the scarcity of water. Pure and limpid streams of running water are rare and far between, and the hunter has often to drink from stagnant ponds, or sluggish brooks, whose feebly trickling currents just serve to link together a series of half-brackish pools. Captain Butler, in his admirable work, “The Great Lone Land,” thus describes prairie scenery :—

“ In summer a land of sound, a land echoing with the voice of birds, the ripple of running waters, the mournful music of the waving pine-branch ; in winter a land of silence, a land hushed to its inward depths by the weight of ice and thick-falling snow, by the intense rigour of a merciless cold—its great

rivers glimmering in the moonlight, wrapped in their shrouds of ice ; its still forests rising weird and spectral against the Aurora-lighted horizon ; its notes of bird or brook hushed as if in death ; its nights so still that the moving streamers across the northern skies seem to carry to the ear a sense of sound, so motionless around, above, below, lies all other visible nature." The unending vision of sky and grass, the dim, distant, and ever shifting horizon ; the ridges that seem to be rolled one upon another in motionless torpor ; the effects of sun-rise and sun-set, of night narrowing the vision to nothing, and morning only expanding it to a shapeless blank ; the sigh and sough of a breeze that seems an echo in unison with the solitude of which it is the sole voice ; and, above all, the sense of lonely, unending distance which comes to the *voyageur* when day after day has gone by, night has closed, and morning dawned upon his onward progress under the same ever moving horizon of sky and grass. Wave upon wave of upland

" In airy undulations far away stretch,
As if the ocean in his greatest swell
Stood still, with all his rounded billows fixed
And motionless for ever."

Only two wild creatures have made this grassy desert their home. The wild red man, who has roamed these wastes for countless ages, back into that dark night which hangs for ever over all we know or ever shall know of early America, in "the time before the white man came ;" and "surging millions of dusky bison." These animals, although but little taller than our Scotch cattle, are larger and deeper in the body ; the shoulders and fore-quarters being very massive, whilst the hind-quarters are comparatively light. All the varieties of the ox have only thirteen pairs of ribs, but the American bison has fifteen. The legs are short and slender, more resembling those of a deer

than an ox, and at first sight give one the impression that they are overweighted by the huge carcase above them. A large bull will weigh about 2000lbs., a fat cow about 1200. A full grown bull in the winter is covered with a thick long curly fur coat, whilst a mane of long brown shaggy hair envelops his neck and forehead, hanging down over the eyes and partially concealing the horns, so that the head appears to be of immense size, and, with the long black bearded chin, savage-looking muzzle, and black flashing eyes, gives him a very ferocious appearance. In reality, however, the bison is a timid animal, and takes to flight instantly on winding an enemy, which its acuteness of scent enables it to do from a great distance. It is only when a bull bison imagines himself unable to escape that he becomes desperate, and therefore to a certain extent dangerous from his great strength. When assembled in numbers they are less wary than at other times.

From the end of July to the beginning of September the bulls are engaged in settling family matters for the year to come, and at this period the bulls fight viciously for the favours of the cows. At this season the young bulls promote themselves by establishing a retiring board and driving the old and useless patriarchs out of the herd. The leader of a herd is generally a splendid young bull who, having fought himself into that position, holds himself ready to maintain his rank by the same prowess that gained it. It may be needless to remark that this party has constantly a fight on hand. The principal food of the buffalo is a short fine grass that grows in tufts and only to the height of four or five inches. This is known by the name of buffalo grass, and is very nutritious either for horses or cattle during the winter months. Buffalo are in the best condition for eating during the fall of the year. The Indians have a queer way of denoting the season. They have the fat buffalo moon, the thin buffalo moon, the moon in which to find

the buffalo with much hair, and the moon when the hair is gone. Such is the red man's calendar.

The best hunting grounds at the present time will be found between the Republican and Arkansas rivers, and between the sandy bluffs of Nebraska and the forks of the Missouri, where the buffalo are still tolerably plentiful at certain seasons. They are not now found in any numbers east of the Missouri river or south of Colorado, but in 1861, before the rush of miners came, they were very abundant in South Park, where they are now exterminated. The habitat of this "monarch of the prairies" is contracting year by year, and its numbers are gradually diminishing. Like the Indian, the Buffalo seems doomed to disappear before the overwhelming tide of advancing civilization, and before long, though not in our day, be known only in history. The nature and needs of both are diametrically opposed to the spirit of the white man's progress, and, in the inevitable conflict, with them for bare subsistence, with us for supremacy, they cannot hold their own. Comparatively speaking it will be but a short time before the buffalo, like the great tusk elk, the mastodon, the dodo, and other extinct animals, that have lived since the appearance of man upon the earth, will only be known to us by its bones; with this advantage, however, over the mastodon—its character, habits, and the territory over which it formerly ranged, are all accurately described by the historian and naturalist, as well as the causes which are leading to its extinction.

In a paper lately read by Mr. W. T. Hays, before the New York Lyceum of Natural History, it is stated that for many years the annual number of robes brought to market has been about 55,000; and when it is known that the skin of the cow only is preserved, and that only in the winter, when the fur is at its best; and that the cows are generally with calf at this season, and that the skin is not taken from more than one in

ten of those animals that are killed, some estimate may be formed of the rapid destruction of the buffalo at the hand of man. Without taking into consideration the deaths from natural causes, accidents, &c., it is a low estimate to place the number of animals destroyed by man each year at not less than half a million.

The indiscriminate slaughter of cows at all seasons of the year has very materially reduced the number of these animals; and unless stringent laws are enacted, limiting the season for hunting, and doing away with the wanton destruction and wholesale annihilation that is now going on in the very breeding grounds, within a few years the race will become extinct, for they are rapidly vanishing from the land.

During the past year the destruction of buffalo was carried on with a rapidity almost unprecedented, although it has been a matter of regretful comment for years. One firm in Leavenworth received 30,000 hides per month, while two others in Kansas City received 15,000 each in the same time. This is at the rate of 2000 slain per day. The immense piles or stacks of hides to be seen at all the stations along the line of the Kansas Pacific Railroad bear witness to the immense slaughter that must be continually taking place. The two largest buyers of buffalo hides are Messrs. Durfrie of Leavenworth and Mr. Charles Bates of St. Louis; it is said that 200,000 hides have passed through their hands in a single year. The prices paid by large dealers in New York, who buy by the hundred bales, is \$16.50 for first-class robes, \$12.50 for second, and \$8.50 for ordinary skins.

It is to be hoped that Congress will take early action to prevent the extinction of the buffalo, by enacting public laws for their preservation in a reservation of lands set apart for the purpose. The government of China has preserved several species of animals from extinction in the imperial parks and

preserves. The Indian government has done the same with the elephant, and the Czar has protected the European bison in the old Forests of Lithuania. Surely the same protection might be afforded to the American bison by the enactment of laws preventing cows being killed during certain times, so as to allow for their increase.

"What shall we do?" said a young Sioux warrior to an American officer, on the Upper Missouri, some fifteen years ago. "What shall we do? the buffalo is our only friend. When he goes all is over with the Dacotahs. I speak thus to you because like me you are a brave."

It was little wonder that he called the buffalo his only friend. Its skin gave him a house, its robe a blanket and a bed, its undressed hide a boat, its short curved horn a powder-flask, its meat his daily food, its sinew a string for his bow, its leather a lariat for his horse, a saddle, bridle, rein and bit. Its tail formed an ornament for his hut, its inner skin a book, on which to sketch the brave deeds of his life, the medicine robe of his history. House, boat, food, bed, and covering, every want from infancy to age; and, after life itself has passed, wrapped in his buffalo-robe, the red man waits for the dawn.

Of the various modes of hunting buffalo adopted in the States, no true sportsman will hesitate to pronounce in favour of the only legitimate way, which is by running them down and killing them at close quarters by a rifle or revolver shot. This is capital fun; for the animal, besides being swift enough to give a good horse enough to do to close with him, often wheels round with such quickness as to baffle both horse and rider for several turns before there is any certainty in bringing him down. The hunter should always get as near a herd as he can without being observed, and then having singled out his quarry, rush in and endeavour to detach it from the rest; this arrangement is easily effected when the hunter has a well trained horse, which

enjoys the chase as much as his rider. Give such a one the rein, and with ears set back and tail playing in the air, he will soon bring you along-side of your game, and with a free, steady stride, keep pace with the buffalo, careering along in "a lollolopping canter," within ten feet of you. Until this time, your revolvers should be in your belt or holster in case of accidents; then, with the thumb of the hand in which the pistol is held, you cock the weapon, the hammer being raised as the pistol is thrown up, and, aiming just behind the shoulder-blade, and about two-thirds down from the top of the hump, you deliver your fire, the report being the signal to your horse to wheel off and prepare for squalls. The rapid motion of the horse and the game is not favourable for any steady aim by means of sights; so for this kind of work a rifle is not necessary, for a hunter who can use his revolver properly, whose hand and eye are accustomed to act together, seldom shoots far from the point aimed at, even at a gallop. If your quarry does not fall in his tracks, but continues to forge ahead, repeat the process until you are sure of the meat; you can generally tell the probable effects of your shots, as if a buffalo shows blood from the nose and mouth it is a sure sign that he is hard hit with a mortal wound. If the shots are not well placed, a buffalo will carry off any amount of lead; but a single revolver ball of good size, well placed, is sufficient to bring down the stoutest bull. The buffalo, when first started by the hunter, generally carries his somewhat short tail close down between his legs; but when wounded or tired he switches it about; and if intending to show fight or charge up, it goes straight on end.

If your horse is not well up to his work, and the buffalo is but slightly wounded and viciously inclined, the tables may be turned, and then comes the probable sequence of the hunter being hunted. The horse now becomes frightened, perhaps the rider feels that he has nerves, loses his head, and is not careful

in picking his way, when, if the horse's foot gets in a prairie-dog's burrow and falls, there is a fair chance that horse or man will come to grief from the pursuer's horns.

The different Indian tribes hunt the buffalo in various ways, but generally from horseback, with the lance or the bow, for they are but indifferent shots with the rifle. The bow used for this purpose is very short, being more convenient for handling on horseback, but it is made of great strength, so that the arrow may be sent with sufficient force to penetrate to the heart. The Grosventres, Blackfeet, and Assinaboines, often destroy hundreds of buffalo at a time, by driving them into large pens or parks formed by two converging fences that have a deep precipice at the end; in the frantic rush that takes place, the mass behind force the foremost ones over the brink. The flesh of the animals killed in this wholesale manner is converted into "pemmican," the Indian's ordinary food when on the war-path or when game is scarce.

In the *Far West*, near the fountain sources of the great rivers, Nature is still in all her wild grandeur. Here the forest is untouched, the prairie unbroken; vast herds of buffalo, and clusters of the red man's wigwams are still to be seen; but, as you leave the fountain sources, in an almost inaccessible country, the marks of civilization appear, and by degrees it is seen that the resources of the soil are being developed by the industry of man. The bosoms of the great rivers are teeming with the wealth of their shores; and cities and villages are springing up on the margins of the mighty rivers, with a rapidity which in time will make them the most populous regions of the world. It is not alone in the forests and prairies, in the mountain-cliffs, verdant valleys, and cities that alternately skirt the banks of these mighty rivers, that the mind is interested. There are other features replete with interest to the scholar and antiquary. There are numerous *tumuli*, or mounds, some of which are

nearly a mile in circumference at their base, and more than a hundred feet in height. The rearing of these mounds must have cost years of labour. They are all of a conical shape, and the layers of earth can still easily be traced. There are ruins also of old fortifications, of acres in circumference, exhibiting all the skill of modern engineering ; and the remains of ancient cities regularly laid out, and apparently once largely inhabited by a civilized people. These mounds, fortifications, and cities, existed far before the advent of the white man in these regions. They were built by some race of people, even anterior to the Indians, for the skill of their construction, and the amount of labour and time required, preclude the most remote possibility of that race having reared them. Even tradition is almost silent concerning the people who built them, and a mist, which man cannot disperse, will for ever hang over these mysterious remains of a lost race.

CHAPTER XVI.

SPORT IN THE "FAR WEST."

EARLY in September I joined a party of four ex-Confederate officers in a hunting expedition on the prairies skirting the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains ; intending, after a cruise in the Geyser region, near the source of the Yellow Stone River—a tributary of the Upper Missouri—to make our way through Wyoming and Montana into the Saskatchewan, which is British territory.

Herbert Slade, Gerald Moore, Léon Villebois, Dr. Le Messurier, and myself had been boon companions during the hard struggle on the James River ; where rest many of our pals, who

“ Went down to their graves in bloody shrouds ; ”

and when the game was at last played out, and God helped the big battalions, we “ made tracks ” for other scenes. Colonel Slade was a Virginian, Moore hailed from the old country, or rather from the Emerald Isle, and Le Messurier and Villebois from Canada ; but all were men of the right grit, and never did a party pull better together. Both the Canadians were experienced woodsmen, and, as they had hunted together over this district for two consecutive seasons, they not only knew the ground well, but had established friendly relations with several trappers and some of the Indian tribes. Five negro servants, who preferred remaining in our service to availing themselves of their newly-acquired freedom, and three half-

breed hunters, who were engaged at Fort Laramie, made our party just a dozen strong. We were all fairly mounted, and our baggage, which consisted of two small tents, ammunition, a fair stock of tea, coffee, sugar, flour, and condiments, with a few changes of under-clothes, was carried in saddle-bags on the spare horses.

We looked a somewhat heterogeneous crew, clad in grey blouses or leathern hunting skirts, leggings of dressed deerskin, fancifully ornamented mocassins, and green wideawake hats; but each man had also his rifle slung at his back or at his saddle-bow, and a revolver, knife, and small axe in a broad waist-belt. Thus equipped and provided, we felt equal to any emergency, and were perfectly independent of external aid, either for maintenance or protection. When the weather was fine we bivouacked under trees or in the open; if rain fell, there was room in the tents to shelter all the party, although our followers rarely availed themselves of it, generally preferring to construct *impromptu* shanties.

We had killed *en route* five bears and plenty of deer, wild turkeys, and prairie chicken, but had seen no fresh sign of buffalo; when on a bright and sunny morning, as we were pursuing our way parallel to the Big Horn River, one of the hunters pointed out a fresh Indian trail, and, following it up, we came to the summit of a rocky ledge, from whence we had a wide prospect of the surrounding country, which was diversified by waving lines of undulating hills and groves of trees. Deer-slots were tolerably numerous, and, as several of the trees were freshly scored with the claws of bears, every one was on the look-out in the hope of starting game; suddenly two of the dogs gave tongue, and an Indian boy broke out of some cover close at hand, and was giving leg-bail, when he was brought up by Colonel Slade, who was scouting ahead, and at once recognised to be of the Blackfoot tribe. Our half-breeds,



AN OPEN BIVOUAC IN THE FAR WEST.

who understood his language, at his instigation struck off into some thick bush close at hand and returned in a moment carrying a second Indian, who was apparently helpless. It appeared that these two, who were father and son, had been scouring the country for some days in search of buffalo sign, when the elder one was badly kicked by his horse, having the left leg broken some inches above the ankle, and the other knee severely bruised. Seeing at a glance that he was in terrible pain and entirely disabled, two of our people carried him on a litter to the banks of a stream, where we intended to make a halt; and here Le Messurier set his leg, and made him comfortable. The Indian, finding himself unexpectedly well treated by white men, made great demonstrations of friendship, and informed us that a part of his tribe were encamped about two days' march from where we were at a point on the Wind River which the buffalo always crossed on their way north. So it was arranged that the youngster should go on ahead and inform his people of his father's condition and of our intention to visit their camp and join their hunt.

On the second day after, as we were travelling slowly along, our scouts ahead observed a couple of horsemen apparently riding in a parallel direction to us and watching our party. They were evidently Indians, but the distance was too great for our people to distinguish whether they were Blackfoots, Sioux, or some other tribe.

Our march was always conducted with certain precautions, so as to be prepared for eventualities, the baggage being in the centre in charge of the negroes, whilst the rest of the people were told off as scouts, flanking parties, and rear-guards. So, giving the word for the ranks to close up and remain on the alert, Slade, Villebois, Pierre, and myself rode forward to reconnoitre.

On arrival at a small clearing we saw a party of about twenty

mounted Indians, armed with spears and rifles, approaching us. Upon our hailing them, the band halted whilst the boy whose father was in our camp and two chiefs came up to us and commenced shaking hands. They were evidently apprehensive as to the safety of their wounded companion, who was one of their principal chiefs, so we took them at once to the horse-litter on which he was; as soon as they had ocular demonstration of his well-being, they were profuse in their expressions of gratitude, and forthwith invited us to their camp, that was pitched in a small valley through which a small tributary of the Wind River flowed. Here we found some twenty lodges, and the presence of numerous squaws and children was a sure sign that the party had started with pacific intentions, for the weaker sex never accompany their lords and masters when on the war trail. We were received with great demonstrations of friendship, and invited to encamp close to their wigwams, but this was scarcely deemed advisable, so we pitched our tents and erected shanties on a small upland about a quarter of a mile above stream, which afforded every convenience for wood and water. We also constructed a kind of rope pound, to prevent our horses straying at night. As the district skirting the Rocky Mountains over which we intended to shoot was, at this season of the year, the resort of numerous parties of predatory Indian tribes, who established transient hunting-camps near the best localities for intercepting the herds of buffalo in their periodical migrations, our expedition partook of a semi-military character; a vigilant watch was kept night and day, and one-third of our number was told off daily as a camp guard. Both ourselves and our followers were admirably mounted and armed with repeating rifles and revolvers, so that we should have proved awkward customers to tackle even for a large force of Indians.

Our camp presented a most picturesque appearance. In

the background rose the glistening, snow-clad Freemont's Peak, which is between thirteen and fourteen thousand feet in height, surrounded by a deep cerulean blue sky, variegated by fleecy clouds and the dark shadowy gorges of the Rocky Mountain chain; whilst the prairie and the river scenery were beautifully diversified by shining reaches bordered by willow copses, oak openings, clumps of cotton-wood, rich emerald-green bottoms and towering forest trees; the many-coloured foliage of which presented that weird-like, yellow autumnal tint which in the rays of the setting sun gives the landscape the glorious golden hue that Claude Lorraine so loved to depict. In the glen on the one side, under gigantic trees from which wild vines hung in countless festoons, was our little camp, with the bivouac fires; round which our people were lounging whilst the cooking was being conducted in true hunters' style, the venison and wild turkeys being stuck upon spits and broiled so as to retain all their natural juices and maintain their peculiar flavour, in such a manner as would have tickled the palate of an alderman. I never found venison or game-birds so delicious as when cooked in this simple manner; and I profess to be a gourmand in my way, and quite up in Mansion House feeds, thanks to the profuse hospitality of that most worthy of City magnates, Sir Sidney Waterlow,—“may his shadow never grow less.” The Doctor and the half-breeds were busy stretching and dressing the skins of different animals that had been killed; Slade was going his usual rounds and inspecting the horses as naturally as if the trumpet for “stables” had just sounded; whilst Moore was superintending the *cuisine* arrangements and keeping the negroes up to their work—that of washing our flannel shirts and socks in the stream. Villebois, our interpreter *en chef*, was surrounded by a troop of Indian braves, who were evidently much amused and well pleased at what he had been telling them; for, in spite of their usual stoical bearing and taciturn manner, they were grimacing and

talking amongst themselves in their strangely guttural language in the most animated and lively manner, and at times, throwing themselves on the ground, made the woods resound with peals of hoarse laughter. Villebois was a man after their own heart, who spoke their language fluently, as well as that of the Dacotahs and Sioux; and they shook off their habitual dignity and roared again at his versatile humour and whimsical stories, which were repeated in the wigwams to the squaws, and spread through the encampment. He had lived for years amongst the Indians, both in the forests of Canada and the prairies round about the Rocky Mountains; and, having shown his mettle in many a sturdy combat both against men and beasts, he was looked up to as a famous brave, and respected by all who knew him.

The surrounding country abounded with game; so both our camp, as well as that of the Indians, was well provided with provisions, and there was continual feasting. I can conceive no existence so free from care and so fruitful of pleasing excitement as that of a well-equipped and experienced hunter who, with a few trusty associates, has the range of an almost unlimited extent of forest abounding with various kinds of game. A forest-ranger, free from the conventionalities of society and the boring routine of everyday existence amongst dwellers in cities, acquires in youth that manly bearing, simplicity of character, and self-dependence, that have ever been conspicuous in the greatest men of all ages. As the absurd cut of fashionable clothes impedes every movement of our limbs, so do the stringent rules society has imposed upon itself, clog and thwart the best impulses of our hearts; and never does a man who has once enjoyed this wild life feel so free, so truly at home, and so supremely happy as when he is once again in the forest or on the prairie, completely beyond the pale of civilization. Our party was equipped and provided so as to be independent in

every sense of the word, being competent not only to protect but also to maintain itself. Every man was prepared at all points for immediate action, either against man or beast ; having a trusty rifle and revolvers, a good horse, and a sufficient quantity of ammunition. This gear is an ample stock-in-trade to a sportsman on these prairies.

The next morning, Pierre, one of our half-breeds, and two Indian scouts came in with the long-wished-for intelligence that they had come upon recent traces of buffalo, and that a small number had actually crossed the river during the night. This news caused great excitement in the camp, and put every one in high spirits. The Indians had sent out the greater part of their hunters in a different direction, where they expected to fall in with the vanguard of the herd ; but some half-dozen of those remaining in camp joined our party, and proved very useful as guides. We rode out a distance of about six miles, and emerged upon an undulating prairie, covered with somewhat parched and dry-looking herbage, where several fresh signs of buffalo were apparent.

The first view of a prairie is an impressive sight not to be forgotten ; it may be said to resemble a vast undulating sea of green verdure, extending on all sides to the horizon, and only broken at rare intervals by a fringe of trees and low bush, forming the margin to some creek or watercourse. But there is something inexpressibly monotonous in riding for day after day over such an immense extent of landscape without meeting with a sign of human life ; and when the first novelty of the scene has worn off, one begins to get very tired of the intense loneliness and dreary solitude of prairie travelling. In this instance, however, the exciting anticipations of buffalo-hunting kept the whole party on the *qui vive*.

The sun had got high above the horizon, and we were thinking of seeking the shade of some friendly cover, when our scouts

who from early morning had taken post on elevated knolls from whence they could survey a vast expanse of prairie, made signs that something was moving, and directed our attention towards the spot by pointing their lances in the direction. At first we could see nothing from the low ground ; but shortly afterwards a pack of seven black wolves crossed the prairie, and catching sight of us, made for some low bush, where they deliberately laid down. "They are after the same game," said Villebois, "and are about to *cache* and form an ambuscade to catch stragglers ;" and we were engaged in watching their movements, when a slight cloud of dust became apparent on the distant horizon, which might have been raised by a troop of Indians or the van of a herd of buffalo.

Having taken up a hole or two in the girths and looked to our arms, so as to be prepared for whichever might turn up, we mounted ; and shortly afterwards one of the sharp-eyed half-breeds, whose powers of vision were as strongly developed as a hawk's, galloped to a slight eminence, and in a few moments returned with the information that a vast herd of buffalo were advancing over the plain. We drew up and halted in a hollow until the return of our scouts, who had pushed ahead to mark the direction taken by the herd ; and then, after a short council of war, it was decided to divide our force into two bodies, each of which should hang on the flanks and attack as the herd passed. Slade, Le Messurier, and four of the best mounted of our party made a dash ahead, so as to take post behind a ridge not far from where the wolves had formed an ambush, which, it was supposed, the herd would skirt from the direction their leaders were heading ; whilst Villebois, Pierre, two Indians, and myself, remained *perdu* in a little copse of willow bush that fringed a shallow gulch. The herd were advancing rapidly, and soon an indiscriminate drove of cows and calves appeared, having a flanking party of a few old bulls.

"Let the van forge ahead before we show ourselves," whispered Villebois, "and then for a burst."

I forgot to mention that my armament consisted of a Westley Richards' 12-bore breech-loading rifle with short barrels, expressly for use on horseback, and a brace of Adams's large-bore army revolvers, which I generally loaded with a flat-headed plug and as much powder as I could get in the chamber. Breech-loading revolvers had not then been brought to the perfection they now are, and reloading was then more difficult; but the latest improved army pistol, invented and patented by Adams, the contractor to the Government, is the *ne plus ultra* of weapons, whether against man or beast; as it can be reloaded whilst at a gallop, and is so simple and strong, that it will stand any hard usage without getting out of order. For buffalo running it is the most suitable arm I know of.

But I am digressing. It was a grand sight to see the approach of the close-ranked phalanx, and to mark its noble array as the herd came careering past, with their long, black, shaggy manes flowing like pennons in the wind, whilst the clatter of such a multitude of hoofs made a peculiar rushing sound, such as I can only compare to the passage of the cyclone through the forest after a long-continued drought, when every branch and tree seem to emit a rending noise, the whole forming an almost deafening chorus.

Whilst I was looking on in perfect astonishment as the immense horde swept past, Villebois, to whom the sound was no novelty, roused me from my contemplative mood to a sense of what was expected of me by shouting above the clattering roar of thousands of hoofs against the hard prairie, "Wake up, old man; meat is wanted; so choose the juiciest-looking cows." I immediately gave my impatient nag the rein, and, like a shot, he was off, for he was used to the sport and gloried in the fun. The ground was good going, and less than ten minutes sufficed



RIDING DOWN A BUFFALO.

to bring me up with the herd, who were travelling at a good hand-gallop. One hairy monster appeared to tower above all his kin, and, disregarding Villebois's injunctions, I resolved to devote my attention entirely to him, and endeavoured, in vain, to force my horse between some cows, so as to get at him or separate him from the herd.

My labours were all in vain for a time, until I bethought me of my revolvers, for I was reserving my rifle for the bull. However, to clear my way up to him, I fired at four cows one after another, aiming just behind the fore-arm, but considerably higher up; to my surprise, two dropped in their tracks, and the two others lagged behind, leaving me a clear opening, through which I forced my horse, and in the twinkling of an eye I was riding alongside of the mighty bull, whose immense weight of head caused him to labour heavily, whilst his eyes flashed in a most diabolical manner, and his tongue hung half out of his open mouth. As I closed upon him he attempted to sheer off, but on that side the herd were closely packed, so, with tail erect, he began flinging his head about and presenting the points of his short black horns in my direction, as if he meditated a charge. Before he could make up his mind, although my horse was very much harassed by a pack of frantic cows, I managed to throw up my rifle and let drive a right and left just behind the shoulder, which brought him down: so engrossed was I at his fall, that I did not take proper care of my horse; for, as he swerved off after firing, we were cannoned by another brace of mad cows and nearly came to grief. Drawing my second revolver, I made after my assailants, and, separating them from the herd, brought them both to their knees, though not before I had expended all the loaded chambers of my revolvers, for my horse's nerves were somewhat shaken in our *mêlée* with the herd, and he became too unsteady to make accurate shooting. The herd, which had divided into



THE DYING MONARCH OF THE PRAIRIE.

two columns, had now moved onward, except a few stragglers who formed the rear-guard; and, having reloaded my rifle and revolvers, I returned to the fallen patriarch, who, to my surprise, got upon his legs as I approached and lowered his head as if he intended to charge; but he was too far gone, and fell. Whilst he was struggling to get on his legs again, I dismounted and put him out of pain with a shot in the centre of the chest. One of the other cows was still showing signs of life, and I was obliged to fire two more shots at her before I could put her out of her agony. The game was now over. I had killed a bull for my own gratification, and five cows and a good-sized calf for camp use and the manufacture of pemmican. My companions had not been idle; each had killed his four or five cows, whilst Villebois had dropped seven to his own rifle as well as a white wolf. Moore had got a severe shaking from a nasty spill; his horse, whilst in pursuit of a buffalo, having put one of his feet in a prairie-dog's burrow and fallen heavily with his rider. No bones were, however, broken, and a few days' rest set him all right again.

This appears to me the chief danger of buffalo-hunting; for a well-armed man has but little danger to fear from the animal itself if he only exercises common precaution. I consider it very tame sport, and felt somewhat disgusted with myself at having taken any part in the shooting of cows; but the herds only pass twice in the year, and the Indian tribe near whom we were encamped had travelled some hundreds of miles in a southerly direction to kill the meat and make pemmican for winter consumption.

On our return to camp there was great rejoicing at our success; but I lost caste amongst the Indians for having wasted my ammunition on an old bull. At night there was great feasting and revelry, and at our evening meal, buffalo-tongues and marrow-bones were the sensational dishes of every mess.

When night set in, the braves who returned empty-handed, gave us a "buffalo dance;" but it was a stupid and uninteresting performance, and I was glad when it was over and our camp was cleared of red-skins, which arrangement I saw carried out before I turned in, as their little game is always "plunder."

CHAPTER XVII.

SPORT IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

THE noble savage or the Red Indian as portrayed by Fenimore Cooper was a very interesting kind of being, but unfortunately he never existed save and except in a sensational novel, and those who are best acquainted with the character, habits of real life, and social condition of existing Indian tribes, are quite satisfied that it is by a very wise dispensation of Providence that they are gradually disappearing from off the face of the earth before the advancing strides of civilisation. Washington Irving, who, from having lived amongst the red men had every opportunity of judging their true character, has not a good word to say of them. He says :—"As far as I can judge, the Indian of poetical fiction is like the shepherd of pastoral romance—a mere personification of imaginary attributes. In fact, the Indians that I have had an opportunity of seeing in real life are quite different from those described in poetry." Cruelty, treachery, and an innate love of thieving are the distinguishing characteristics of the red men of the present day, and, to give them their due, they are the most cunning and accomplished cattle-lifters on the face of the earth. Their blood-thirsty nature, habitual laziness—except when engaged in some predatory expedition—and intemperate habits will ever be a bar to their being admitted within the pale of civilisation ; consequently their eventual extermination is only a question of time. Hunting and smoking appear to be the only occupations of the men ; for, naturally indolent and slothful—although they



CHEYENNE INDIANS.

will go through great privation and fatigue when hunting or on the war path—they will not work, and look upon labour as a disgrace. Their women do all the drudgery, cultivate maize and tobacco, and carry all the burdens and portable property from place to place. Neither the men nor the women are good-looking, for although they have all piercing black eyes, they generally incline downwards towards the nose, which is broad and flat. They have thick lips, high cheekbones, narrow foreheads, and shaggy, straight black hair; and, to make themselves more hideous if possible, their faces are usually smeared over with some bright-coloured pigment in stripes or patches. They are besides disgustingly dirty, and generally well stocked with loathsome vermin. The various predatory tribes that rove over the prairies round the Rocky Mountains, and far south in Colorado and Arizona, have no fixed residence, but wander at will over the territory; making raids upon the borders of civilisation, killing men, women, and children indiscriminately, stealing horses, mules, and cattle, destroying villages, haciendas, and ranches, and then retreating into the mountain fastnesses, where they can defy pursuit. In character they resemble the prairie wolf, being sneaking, cowardly, and revengeful, with scarcely a redeeming quality. Such is their general character; although now and again a chief is to be met with who has some slight notion of personal honour, inasmuch as he will not allow a stranger who is an invited guest to be molested whilst under his protection, although he would not hesitate to steal his cattle or take his scalp as soon as he had got clear of his village. From a residence of some weeks amongst a hunting party of the Blackfoot tribe, I gathered a good deal of information as to their social life, which may be tersely described in the words of an old traveller who wrote in the fifteenth century:—"Manners have they none, and their habits are beastly." The red man's religion is a strange one;

he believes in good and evil spirits, and performs certain rites to keep straight with the Evil One, whilst he scarcely troubles himself about "Manitou," the Great Spirit, who, he believes, is too good to do him harm. His idea of Heaven appears to be quite as rational as that of some sects of Christians—who imagine their future lies amongst the clouds, where, with awkward-looking wings, long hair, white-flowing drapery, and palm branches in their hands, their chief occupation will be chorus singing—and somewhat less sensual than that of the followers of Islam, who believe that, after having passed over the bottomless pit—the abode of Shitaun—by a bridge narrow as the sharp edge of a sword, they will enter into the blessed land of Houris, where seventy green-kerchiefed virgins will continually wait on them and minister to their comfort. The red man, according to his lights, conceives Heaven to be a vast ever green forest, an illimitable hunting-ground, where there is a never decreasing stock of game, and perpetual fine weather, and where he, his favourite horse and squaws, will never be exposed to the vicissitudes of hunger, thirst, and cold. That he may make his appearance in these regions like a chief and a brave in fitting state, his favourite mustang, his best dress, wampun belt, arms, scalps, and pipe are buried with him. Each and every sect seem to have their own peculiar ideas of "that bourne from which no traveller returns;" and perhaps those are the happiest and the most fearless of death who believe the future to be only an eternal rest after the toilsome and anxious journey through life is ended; a creed that comes naturally to all who are not schooled in certain grooves, and who think for themselves; and the only one that appears to be in entire accordance with the never-changing laws and teachings of Nature. Such is the faith of most of the hunters, trappers, and backwoodsmen whom I have fallen in with in the Far West; and as a rule these are men of indomitable bravery, who in the

pursuit of their dangerous calling carry their lives in their hands, and constantly owe their escape from their Indian enemies to their cool intrepidity, promptitude of action, and skill with the rifle. Fine, tall, sinewy, athletic fellows these solitary hunters are; and although somewhat taciturn and reticent to a stranger, they are boon companions when their confidence is gained, and men of sterling metal in a fray. Their usual costume is a fringed leathern hunting-shirt, buckskin breeches, leggings, and moccasins; and their armament is a heavy single small-bore rifle, a brace of revolvers, and a bowie-knife. Their equipment consists of a saddle-horse, and two or three mules to carry their packs, which contain reserve ammunition, a few pounds of tobacco, a certain number of traps, and their peltries. Such men are the pioneers of civilisation in the Far West; from the greater part of their lives being spent in solitude, with no other companion but Nature herself, their powers of observation get to be wonderfully developed; being constantly exposed to dangers of all sorts, they become callous to them; and as they look upon the red men as their natural enemies, they are always as ready to take life as they are to expose their own. As their calling often obliges them to remain in the neighbourhood of Indian tribes, their lives constantly depend upon incessant vigilance; and they can detect the slightest sign that betrays the presence of their wily foes. Many a spirit-stirring tale have I heard from these simple-minded men, of their hair-breadth escapes and adventures, as we sat and smoked round the watch-fire; and from all that I can gather, for every white hunter who has "gone under," a dozen red skins' scalps dangle round the trappers' rendezvous. The Indian looks upon the white man as an intruder on his domain, and never neglects an opportunity of doing him an injury. Should he be taken prisoner by a hostile tribe, he is put to death by the most horrible tortures; even of late years



INDIAN CRUELTY.

instances have been known of hunters having been skinned alive, or of their entrails being drawn out by the women ; so that it is no wonder that in retaliation the red man is hunted down and "wiped out" whenever the white man comes across him. Thus war is continually waged between the races on the frontiers of civilisation, and travelling in these regions is dangerous unless the party is sufficiently strong to hold its own against all comers.

The Wyoming and Montana prairies, extending from the Dakota Territory, on the right bank of the Missouri river to the base of the Rocky Mountains, is the great haunt of the buffalo and various other kinds of game. These great grassy plains are the hunting grounds of all the surrounding Indian tribes, who are constantly at feud and warring with each other, so that none of them have any permanent residence in this territory ; although at certain seasons of the year the Grosventres, Osages, Mandans, Unkapas, Sioux, Pawnees, Cheyennes, Arrapahocs, Blackfeet, and Comanches repair there in numerous bodies to hunt the buffalo, and manufacture pemmican for winter consumption.

In these expeditions the hunters are all prepared for offensive and defensive action, and should the war parties of adverse tribes meet, sanguinary conflicts ensue, in which no quarter is given. Sportsmen wishing to hunt over this debatable ground should go in sufficiently strong numbers to be able to hold their own in case of attack ; and a vigilant watch should be kept over the horses and cattle night and day, as predatory bands of Indians will hang about a camp for days together, seeking for a favourable opportunity to carry off the horses. Their usual mode is for two or three of their number to creep unseen amongst the horses at night, and unfasten their hobbles and picket pins as they are grazing, then quietly to mount, and start off suddenly at full speed ; when the chances are that the

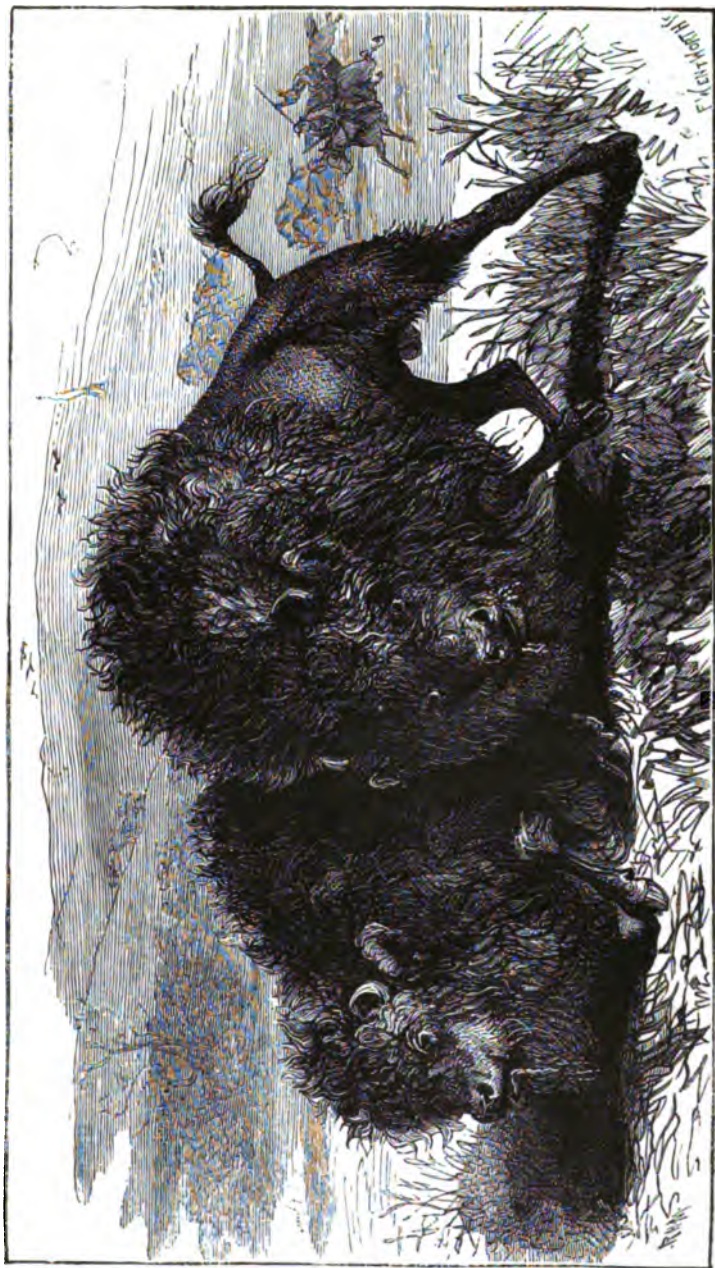
whole troop will follow, as nothing is so contagious amongst horses as a night panic, and it very often happens that one or two horses breaking away in this manner will alarm the whole number, and cause them to set off and follow their leaders at full gallop. The Indians are the most adroit thieves, and manage to spirit off horses and cattle before the very eyes of their owners, in the most unaccountable manner; often getting out of rifle range before they are detected, when, urging their prizes into a gallop, they are soon out of reach of pursuit. The following account will give a pretty fair idea of the danger of hunting in the prairies skirting the Rocky Mountains, a few years ago.

We had halted for three days in the valley of the Sweet-water River, on account of the fine grass, which furnished good food for our animals, when, in the course of the afternoon, two waggons and a party of miners came up, and encamped near us. My friends, Villebois and the Doctor, had met them at Laramie, and invited them to our camp, as we had killed a good deal of game, and had plenty of fresh meat. The party consisted of eleven men, four women, and several children, and they were on the way to Fort Boisé, on the Snake River, by the south pass, which lies at the head of the Sweet-water River. As they had only some fifteen days' stock of provisions, a long distance to go, and many mouths to feed, we determined to have a grand hunt, so as to obtain a good quantity of buffalo meat for them, none of the men having much experience in woodcraft.

The next day, Colonel Slade, Moore, Le Messurier, Villebois, and I, accompanied by our half-breeds, a score of Blackfoots, and a couple of Irish miners, who drove the waggons, which we took with us to bring back the game, started at dawn, after having provided for the safety of the camp, and, taking a northerly direction, made for the tributaries of the Big-horn

River, where it was reported that buffalo were plentiful. Towards noon we came to a grove of cotton-wood, where we found signs of a late Indian encampment, as discarded poles of lodges, and fresh skulls of deer and buffalo, were lying about. Villebois, who was well versed in "Indian sign," and the half-breeds, after a short examination of the ground, at once pronounced that it was the deserted camp of a large party of Sioux, who were evidently on the war path, as there were no traces of women having accompanied the party. This opinion was confirmed by our Indian scouts, who estimated their number at over a hundred; so, after a careful scrutiny of the trail, which was not above two days old, it was resolved to reconnoitre the country round about before commencing to hunt, lest the report of our rifles should draw down upon us a large force, who might commence an attack whilst our party was scattered about looking after game. After following up their trail some distance, we came to the banks of a small stream, where tracks of numerous horses showed that a large force of mounted Sioux had crossed on their way to the westward, in the direction of the north fork of the Platte River, which stream flows through their country. Thinking that they had turned their faces homeward, and that we were in no danger of being molested, we resumed our northerly course, and, striking the Big-horn River, halted near a willow grove, as a fine herd of prong-horns, and several outlying bands of buffalo had been seen by the scouts. After about an hour's ride, we saw a troop of some thirty or forty buffalo slowly defiling along the slope of a hill about half a mile to our right; and, halting our party a few moments until they began to descend the other side, so that our approach would be concealed by the crest of the undulation, we divided into two parties to outflank them on both sides and gave chase.

After a burst of a few minutes, we got to the top of the rise,



A BUFFALO SUPPORTING HIS WOUNDED MATE.

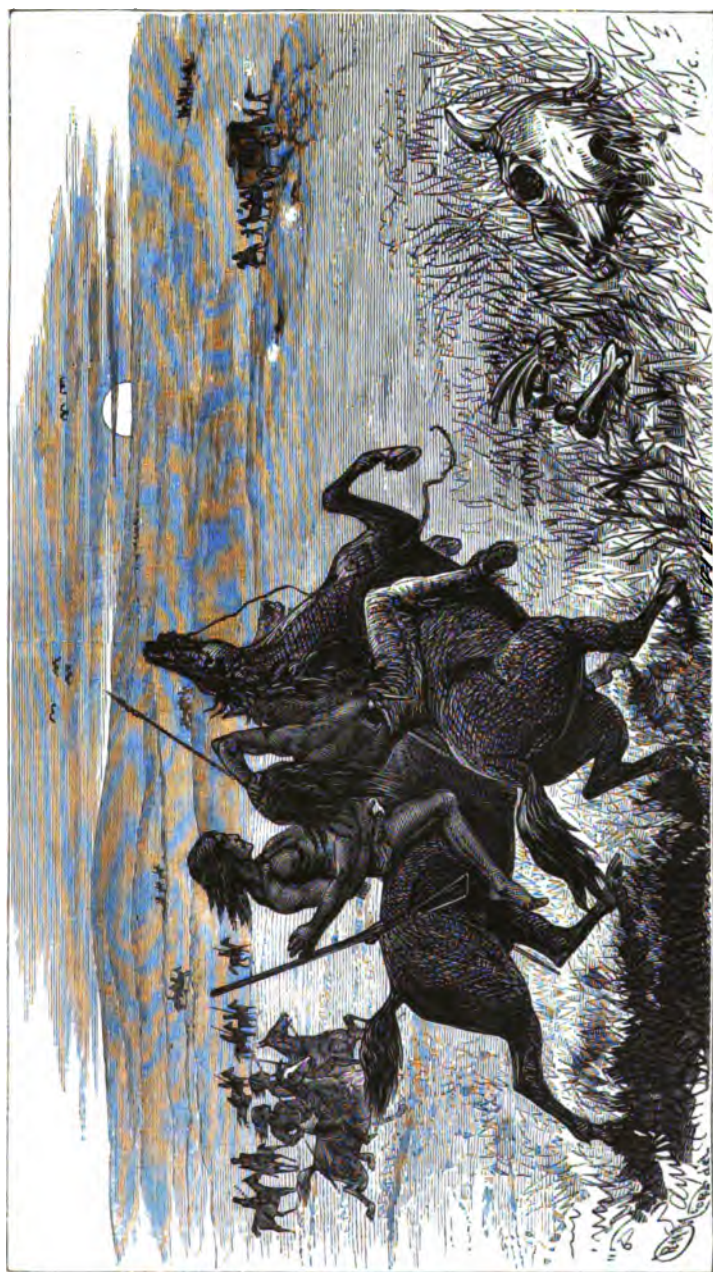
and were within four hundred yards' distance of the herd before our presence was discovered ; then each hunter, selecting his quarry, gave chase, and in a few minutes we gained on them sufficiently to open fire.

The prairie was hard, and very good riding ground, and my nag being in very fair condition, I was enabled to forge ahead and outflank them. Seeing the leader, a young bull, was trying to cross my course, I pulled up and gave him a shot behind the shoulder, which brought him to the ground for a moment ; but the bullet, although it had broken the upper part of the fore-arm, had not struck a vital part, and he immediately got up on his three legs and tried to scramble along. He was evidently hard hit, and kept falling forward ; and I was riding up to give him his *quietus*, when another young bull tore frantically between us, and to my intense surprise sheered up alongside his wounded mate, as if endeavouring to support him. I was much struck with this display of fraternal affection, and, although I followed pretty closely after, forbore firing until the second buffalo, with a snort of rage, lowered his head, and, with tail on end and eyes flashing, charged my horse, which wheeled round short, and in two or three bounds was out of reach of his ferocious-looking adversary. Seeing the tables were likely to be turned, I gave him the contents of my second barrel, and the heavy bullet, entering the neck just behind the jowl, penetrated the brain, and he fell in a heap, stone dead. I now rode up to the bull I had first wounded, and put him out of his misery with a single shot behind the ear, from one of Adams' large-bore revolvers, which is by far the handiest weapon for buffalo running, as it is not so cumbrous as the rifle when mounted, and is very effective from the heavy projectile and large charge of powder it carries.

Having cut off the tails of the dead bulls and attached them to my saddle, I slung my rifle on my back and gave chase to

three cows that were labouring heavily up a low hill covered with a scanty growth of absinthe shrubs. After a hard chase all three succumbed to repeated discharges from my revolvers. As each dropped, I cut off the tails, so as to prevent disputes as to the meat, and was so much engaged with my own affairs that I did not pay much attention to the doings of the rest; when all at once ping, ping, ping went three bullets in my direction, although considerably overhead, and on looking round I saw a group of Indians advancing in my direction. My horse saw them too, and from the excitement of the chase became so skittish that I could hardly get into the saddle, but I scrambled up and made my way at a hand gallop to the rest, who had seen the hostile Indians before I did, and were forming up to show a bold front to a large troop that appeared to be endeavouring to cut off our retreat to the waggons. No time was to be lost. I hastily reloaded both rifle and revolvers, and then we divided our little force and arranged that Villebois' Slade, Moore, and myself, with Pierre and the three half-breeds, who were all well mounted and armed with rifles and revolvers, should act as skirmishers, whilst Doctor Le Messurier and the Blackfoot scouts should act as a reserve and slowly retreat upon the waggons, which were about a mile in the rear. The hostile Indians, who proved to be a second war party of Sioux, Rapahocs, and Suchangu Dacotas—their allies—were divided into three bands, only one of which was within long rifle range, and these had halted to allow those behind to close up. We therefore determined to make a vigorous attack on the nearest band before their force was augmented, and having arranged that some of the Blackfoot scouts—who as a rule are bad shots—were to be in readiness to hold our horses; in the face of a desultory but ineffective fire that was opened upon us, and sundry flights of arrows, we rode up to within five hundred yards, and, dismounting, knelt down and took several steady

pot-shots at the group, just as they were preparing to charge down upon us. At this range our aim was pretty accurate, and several of our antagonists were put *hors de combat*; but without waiting to see the result of our doings, we remounted, and beat a hasty retreat upon the waggons, which we found already on the move, as the party left in charge, hearing the reports of our fire-arms, had got the mules harnessed, ready to carry in the game. The Sioux were now yelling like fiends all round us, but they took good care not to come within range of our rifles, and we cared but little for their war-whoops. We now held a council of war, and it was determined that, as we had still three hours' daylight, we should make the best of our way back to a patch of thick cover about four miles distant, near a *cañon*, at the bottom of which was a fine stream of water, and there encamp for the night. Dividing our little force into an advance guard, flanking parties, and rear guard, with the waggons in the centre, we boldly pushed forward, and Slade, Villebois, Moore, Le Messurier, and I, who were all armed with breech-loading rifles and revolvers, rode in the van, and recommenced the game by opening fire at about six hundred yards distant, at which range our weapons killed and wounded a few men and horses, whilst their arms were quite ineffective. Seeing that they were unable to cope with us as long as daylight lasted, from the superiority of our arms, they retired as we advanced; and we took the opportunity of cutting away some of the meat from the three cows I had killed, which we passed *en route* for the cover, for our stock of provisions was not large in case we should be besieged for any length of time by superior numbers. The Sioux, who had lost several of their number without inflicting any harm on our party, drew up in two bodies on our flanks and rear; each troop appearing to number over a hundred horsemen. We were seven whites, four half-breeds, and about a score of Blackfoot scouts, but our superior arma-



A SKIRMISH WITH INDIANS.

ment put us upon pretty equal terms. As we approached the cover, the ground became undulated, and intersected by natural ridges and depressions; and Villebois, who was up to every move in Indian warfare, proposed that we should have one more brush with the enemy whilst the daylight lasted; so on passing the next ridge, Slade, Villebois and myself, dismounting, gave our horses in charge of the half-breeds, and hid ourselves amongst a small patch of low shrubs. The Sioux, not expecting this manœuvre from so small a force as ours appeared to be, came carelessly on, only watching the party round the waggons; presently we saw a detached troop of about a score approaching our ambuscade, each second bringing them more distinctly into view. When they were well within range, Slade gave a low whistle, the signal to fire, and three double shots were delivered, which cleared a great gap in their number, and caused the remainder to execute a speedy retreat; but our breech-loaders were soon reloaded, and we dropped two or three more before they got out of range. After they had withdrawn to some distance, Villebois, noticing that two of the Sioux seemed to be moving, sent out Pierre and some of the scouts to fetch them in, at the same time giving him strict injunctions not to allow the dead to be scalped. When the Sioux, saw their two dead and two wounded carried towards our waggons, they fairly yelled with rage, naturally supposing that the last indignity had been offered to them; but we had no such intentions, and leaving the dead as we found them, Le Messurier bound up the wounds of the other two, both of whom were very badly hit, as one was shot through the groin, and the other had both sides of his lower jaw carried away, and laid them down, so that their friends could carry them away. This done, we again moved on, and reached the cover unmolested, where we made extensive preparations, in case the Sioux should attempt a night attack. Several large poplars were cut down so as to form an *abatis*,

and the horses and mules were all tethered together round the waggons so as to prevent a stampede. There was no danger of our being attacked in rear, as the banks of the *cañon* were almost scarped and quite forty feet in depth. We posted a line of sentries in the front, and made our cooking fires in a hollow, so that their light would give the enemy no advantage, and having taken every precaution, half of us remained on the watch whilst the others slept, and taking turn and turn about we passed a somewhat anxious night. The next morning at daylight our scouts reported that no hostile Indians were in sight, and it was evident that they had gone some time, as two or three troops of prong-horn antelope were quietly grazing on the ground over which we had skirmished the evening before. Sending some of our scouts to follow up the trail of the Sioux, so as to make sure that none were lurking in our vicinity, we made a "surround," and managed to bag nine fine antelope.

After having ascertained that our antagonists had "vamosed," we retraced our steps and recovered some of the buffalo meat that had been shot by our people the day before; and having killed three other cows which had been previously wounded, either by some of our own party or the Sioux, and loaded our waggons with meat, we once more turned our horses' heads toward the Sweet-water valley, arriving at our camp as the sun was going down; when we forgot our troubles in the enjoyment of a luxuriant supper, in which buffalo tongues, marrow-bones, and choice morsels of broiled venison were conspicuous.

After several days' somewhat monotonous marching—for we dared not straggle much to hunt, on account of the number of hostile Indian marauding parties that were hanging about our flanks and rear, ready to take advantage of any unguarded moment and attack our camp or carry off our horses—we again entered the mountains by a gap in the Wind River range that led into the Gallatin Valley. Here we struck the Gallatin

River about sixty miles south of its junction with the Madison River and the Jefferson Fork, all of which are tributaries to, and form the head-waters of, the Missouri. These streams take their rise in basins formed by successive mountain ranges, and flow in a northerly direction through separate gorges or cañons, which concentrate at the head of a broad valley, having high lateral mountains, indented with beautifully-wooded ravines. The surrounding scenery was certainly very grand, although scarcely to be compared with the Alps, much less the Himalayas. To the southward rose the Gallatin and Madison peaks, the Three Tetons, and Fremont's Peak, whose lofty, snow-capped summits had formed our principal landmarks for the last two hundred miles of our route northward ; whilst to the northward the Rocky Mountains rose in successive ranges, each overtopping the preceding one until they culminated in the massive cloud-capped, snow-crowned chain, the dividing ridge between the Atlantic and Pacific watersheds. It must not be supposed that the Rocky Mountains consist of a single lofty but narrow range ; on the contrary, they are a succession of ranges or separate chains, which run more or less parallel to each other, and form a continuous mountain system, in some places nearly two hundred miles wide ; not including numerous offshoots and outlying spurs, such as the Big-Horn range, and the Wolf Mountains in Wyoming and Montana. The region comprised within these ranges is so varied in its characteristics as to afford a sublime field for the landscape painter, although its luxuriant parks, lovely winding valleys, wild cañons, and desolate ravines, walled in by cliffs and snowy peaks that pierce the clouds and cast all kinds of fantastic shadows below, almost defy the pencil of the artist.

Our route along the Gallatin Valley was simply too beautiful for description. We passed between high serrated mountain ranges, which in the early morning were enveloped with fleecy white clouds along the summit, whilst every gorge and chasm

on their rugged sides was distinctly discernible ; and castellated rocks of white and red sandstone, and cliffs of basaltic formation, half hidden by groves of pines, reminded one of the ruined castles one often falls in with in the valleys of Germany and Italy. In some places cliffs of massive rock rose precipitously, pines and dark cedars clothing the overhanging ledges where they could find a foothold and sufficient nutriment, the cliffs appearing bare and rugged where the scarps were too steep for vegetation to grow. The valley being well watered with numerous murmuring streams, fringed with cotton-wood and willows, was filled with the richest pasturages, alternating with glades of short delicate buffalo-grass, with its clusters of pink flowers and piñon groves ; these again generally gave place to thickets of locust and scrub-oak as we neared the lateral hills while on the more elevated slopes were clusters of noble pines and stately cedars, variegated with groups of good-sized oaks. At elevations where the tree-forest ceases, and the only vegetation consists of stunted shrubs and hardy ferns, the explorer will find thousands of wild flowers, some of them blossoming even in the snow. Here spring comes late in June, and the brief August summer clothes the heights with odoriferous grasses and alpine primroses, one of the richest and rarest of wild flowers ; but I saw none of the delicate, sweet-scented *edelweis*, which is, I believe, peculiar to the higher elevations of the Alps. Between the pine-belt and the perpetual snow are to be found troops of bighorns (*Ovis Montana*) and white mountain goats (*Capra Americana*), besides whistlers or mountain badgers, two kinds of marmots, numerous mottled grouse and ptarmigan, and occasionally grizzly and cinnamon bears and moose, which are sometimes driven up to the higher altitudes by the pest of flies. The valley of the Gallatin was a favourite resort of buffalo ; and we constantly came across herds of cabree or prong-horned antelope, which latter had evidently not been much disturbed, as they

were by no means wild, and with a little tact we could generally manage to get within range. During the months of October and November the weather is beautifully mild and favourable for hunting expeditions, as the forest is in good condition for examining the tracks of animals, as well as for stealthily approaching them by gliding noiselessly in moccasins from tree to tree. At this season of the year, when sombre grey is the prevailing colour of the woods, it takes a practised eye to discern deer amongst the trunks of trees which they nearly resemble in colour. Tracking deer at this time, too, requires considerable experience, for although the slots may be plain enough in the soft, damp leaves, it is not always easy to determine whether they are fresh or a day or two old.

Along this romantic valley, in the midst of thick pine woods, turbulent mountain streams dash over rocky beds and down steep descents into the Gallatin River, forming numerous waterfalls, or "ha-has," as the Indians call them; while here and there, in depressions evidently caused by volcanic agency, were pretty miniature lakes and tarns, connected one with another by little purling brooks, which, shut in with woods and buttressed with walls of rock, tumble over great bluffs into the low land at their own wild will. The primeval forests by which they are surrounded have an inexpressible fascination for the explorer of their solemn and mysterious domains. At times, so profound is the ghost-like silence which reigns in these wilds, that even the twitter of the squirrel or the hollow tapping of the wood-pecker is positively a relief, and dispels gloomy and depressing thoughts. Here strange sights constantly meet the eye, and strange sounds fall upon the ear; but of all the weird-like, hollow cries that come vibrating over the water, like the scream of a gnome, that of the loon, or the great northern diver, is the most startling and demon-like; although it is one that accords well with the wild associations of a primitive American forest. Again, in

some places where the tangled vines interlace the tree-tops, innumerable birds infest the woods, filling the air with interminable chatter, whilst black, red, or grey squirrels are seen chasing each other and gamboling on the branches overhead.

The valleys of the Gallatin, the Madison River, and the Jefferson Fork being exclusively the hunting-grounds of the Blackfoot tribes, with whom we were on the most friendly relations, we had no longer any cause to apprehend attack from hostile Indians, and therefore resolved to halt for some days in this district, which abounded with game, so as to obtain a sufficient supply of dried flesh and pemmican to see us well on our way, in case of our finding game scarce farther on. Selecting a small cliff-like promontory that overhung a bend in the river as a defensible position in case of accidents, with the aid of some half-a-dozen of our Blackfoot guides, our people, under Villebois' direction, in the course of a couple of days constructed three comfortable log shanties, roofed with birch-bark, which afforded ample accomodation for our party, as well as a screened shed for the best of our cattle. This was a necessary precaution, as in these mountains sudden showers are frequent, coming up in a few moments and enveloping the valleys in gloom and obscurity, which are again suddenly dissipated by a burst of sunshine. Here, beside this rippling stream, we established a home such as the true hunter's heart yearns for, and, with lofty mountains and dense forest all around, we lived for some weeks in the highest physical and social enjoyment. Venison, buffalo meat, big-horn mutton, wild turkeys, grouse, wood-duck, and fish never failed us. We enjoyed grand sport, and the days flew serenely by, whilst at night we gossiped, played whist, told yarns, and sang round a roaring camp fire of glowing embers until the drowsy god made his visit, when we turned into our hammock and enjoyed our well-earned sleep. The *réveil* always sounded at the first break of day, by which time the

negro servants had generally a substantial breakfast ready, to which we did ample justice after a refreshing dip in the stream; then we divided ourselves into two or three hunting parties, one remaining, by turn, in charge of the home-guard, there to superintend the drying of the meat and the stretching of buffalo skins; for we now contemplated returning eastward by the Missouri, and required well-prepared hides for our boats, craft of this material being more durable and commodious than birch-bark canoes.

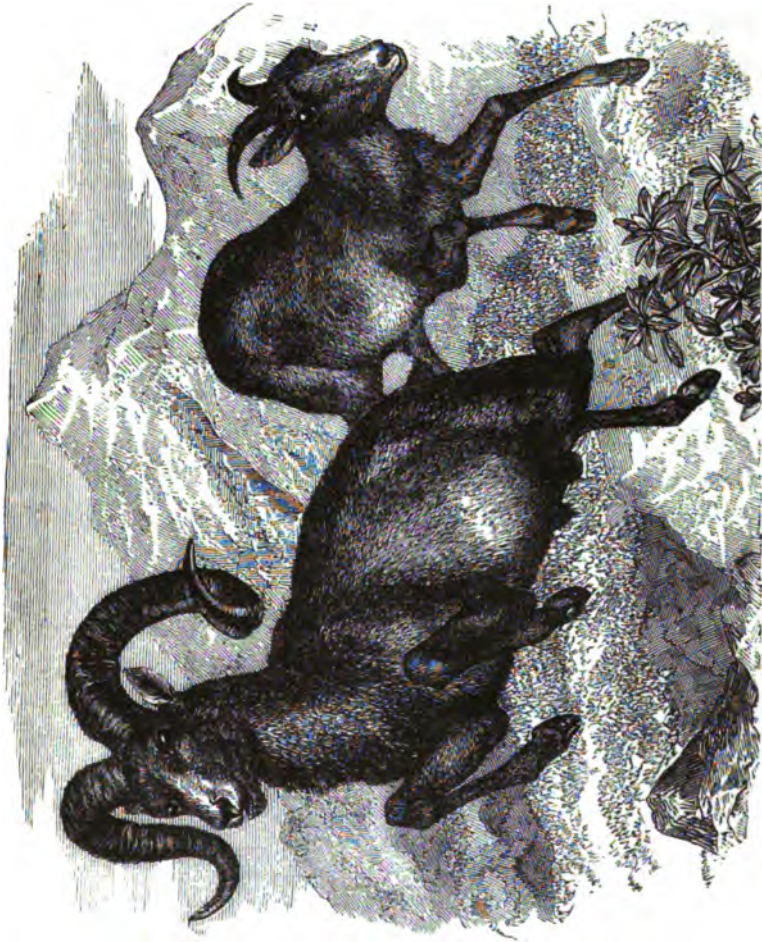
One day Colonel Slade, Villebois, and I, accompanied by Pierre, the half-breed, and three of our Blackfoot scouts, made a lengthened expedition to the higher ranges that lay to the west of the Gallatin peak. After two days' hard travelling, we came to a beautiful mountain lake of considerable size, which is said to be the source of the Henry's Fork, one of the headwaters of the Snake, better known as the Columbia River, which falls into the Pacific at Astoria. Here we had fine sport amongst the bighorns and mountain goats, for the ground was very favourable for stalking; and the game, perhaps having never been disturbed, was anything but wild. The summit of the ridge was of serrated secondary rock, sometimes heaped in strata like immense slates, while at others its gigantic boulders were heaped promiscuously one on the other, as if shivered and heaved up by some violent convulsion of the earth. Here and there were beautiful slopes and glades carpeted with aromatic scented grasses, and the more sheltered sides of the walls of scarped rock that rose in ridges from the centre plateau were generally clothed with many-coloured mosses. In some places long grey mosses hung from the scarped rocks, like frayed and dusty banners on the walls of old cathedrals. Occasionally, cropping up from the sandstone, were masses of limestone, greenstone, and quartz, richly veined with silver and lead ore; whilst on some specimens of quartz I found both gold

and copper. The higher up we ascended, the thinner became the layer of soil, and the scantier the vegetation. I could nowhere see any protruding ridges of primary rock, although here and there gigantic fragments of granite, with gneiss and mica slate, had been thrown out by the action of volcanic agency. and lay above the secondary and tertiary formations. Mountain scenery in America has aspects peculiarly its own. It resembles a bleak Scotch deer-forest denuded of heather, an Alp without *latschen*, but rugged and bare.

We had encamped in the pine forest at a high altitude, and the night was extremely cold, so that, notwithstanding we slept between two huge fires, and had plenty of coverings and buffalo robes, we became keenly alive to the change of temperature. and from time to time found ourselves crouching round the fire. Early morning saw us awake and stirring; and as soon as the grey mists lifted, we packed up our gear and recommenced the ascent, as we hoped to catch the bighorns feeding on ground where we had seen fresh tracks the day before. We were not disappointed; hardly had we cleared the outskirts of the pine forest, when we saw a flock of three rams and four females quietly browsing in a grassy hollow some five or six hundred yards distant. We immediately retreated to the cover of the pines, and there, separating into two parties, commenced to outflank the game, so as to get the herd between two fires. The nature of the ground was such that this was easily accomplished; and, after a little careful stalking, Slade and I managed to get well above them to the left, whilst Villebois and Pierre occupied a similar position on the right. Our manœuvre had been carefully watched by the Blackfoot scouts, who had remained under cover of the pine forest; and when they saw that we were fairly posted, they issued out and showed themselves, when the bighorns, after gazing inquisitively at them for a few moments, quietly turned round and began to ascend the

mountain in single file, the old ram that was leading now and again turning round to watch the intruders. Seeing that they were not followed, they became quite unsuspecting of danger ; and as they edged off towards our ambuscade I dropped the leading ram in his tracks and broke the spine of a female, whilst Slade killed two other females that ventured quite close to us in their panic, and Villebois, by a fine shot, dropped another ram. Thus, in less than a minute, we were provided with a rare stock of food. The horns of the old ram, although nearly sixteen inches in circumference at the root, were very much broken, and very imperfect as specimens, and the flesh was too rank to eat. So, whilst Villebois was superintending the garolloching and cutting up of the females, Slade and I clambered up to the crest of the slope, from whence we had a very good view of the surrounding country. With the aid of my field-glass I soon discovered two other flocks of bighorns ; and, after watching their movements for a short time, my companion went after one troop, whilst I set to work to stalk the other. As we had already nearly as much meat as we could carry, I only wanted to secure a fine pair of horns ; and whilst I made my way along the scarp below which the game was unsuspiciously browsing, I marked a fine ram who was far more engaged in paying delicate attentions to the female part of the community than in attending to his breakfast ; getting within easy range without being perceived, I put an end to his flirting with a shot between the withers, which ended his career. The report of my rifle caused a general stampede, and the herd ran about to and fro as if bewildered, passing and re-passing me at least a dozen times before they finally made off ; and if I had wanted meat, I could easily have secured two or three more of their number, but as my object was accomplished, I let them go scatheless, and, after a hard scramble, managed to reach the fallen ram. I found the flesh

was as rank as that of an ibex in the rutting season, so I simply contented myself with carrying off his head, for the horns, although not very large, were perfect and well-shaped. Slade,



BIGHORNS.

whilst creeping round towards the other flock of bighorns, came across a covey of ptarmigan sitting close together under a rock ; and, firing a couple of raking shots, he managed to secure three of their number, which turned out admirable eating. On our

return to Villebois, he informed us that Pierre had wounded a fine white goat, and was tracking it up by the blood; and shortly afterwards that individual returned with the head and skin of his quarry, which he found dead. The bighorn of the Rocky Mountains is as tall as a good-sized donkey, having a head like a goat, and spiral horns that curve round most gracefully, in the same way as those of an English ram. The largest pair of horns I obtained were very nearly forty inches in length, following the curve; but Villebois killed an old ram whose horns measured forty-two inches in length, and sixteen in circumference round the base. The bighorns are covered with coarse ash-grey hair, which becomes white on the belly and inside the thighs; and the old rams are considerably darker than the young ones. The female is much smaller than the male, and has horns somewhat like those of a ewe, but straighter.

Having collected our meat, we made the best of our way back to the lake, and were glad to find ourselves once more in a temperature where we could perspire from exertion, as the intense cutting cold of the higher altitude was very trying to all of our party. Here we lighted a huge fire and established a comfortable bivouac; and, after a substantial supper, a glass of stiff grog, and a good night's rest, in the morning our fatigues were forgotten, although a certain stiffness remained, which I think was the chief cause of our turning our attention to fishing as the day's occupation. Slade and Villebois were both keen votaries of "*ye gentle arte*," and had provided themselves with all kinds of tackle; so they soon commenced work, and, the trout being hungry, in a few moments half a dozen of the spotted beauties were jumping about on the land, the largest being about a couple of pounds in weight. I am no angler either in theory or practice; but I have, of course, fished in my time, sometimes for want of food, and at others for the sake of

companionship, and my lines have often fallen in pleasant places; still I never took to the sport as a diversion. Wordsworth was fond of it, whilst Byron held it in contempt. Nelson continued to fish after he had lost his right arm, holding the rod with his left hand; and Paley, upon being asked when a book of his would be finished, replied, "My Lord, I shall work steadily at it when the fly-fishing season is over." Notwithstanding that so many great men have found indescribable pleasure in this diversion, I always preferred the gun to the rod. Having seen, therefore, that my friends were settled down to their sport, I started with Pierre and one of the Blackfoot scouts for a cruise round the lake. This was of no great extent, and in the course of a couple of hours we came to the Henry River flowing out of it, and forming a series of beautiful cascades as it tore down into the ravine below. Whilst I was looking round and admiring the extreme wildness of the scenery, I suddenly heard, the crashing of branches at no great distance, and almost immediately afterwards a black-tailed deer came rushing past at full speed, followed by some other animal, which, from a momentary glance, I thought was a large grey wolf. As the line they were taking led to the river, which flowed in a chasm of rock and was impassable, I knew that if the chase lasted they must double back and pass near where we were standing; so Pierre and I took up positions on large boulders of rock, from whence we could get a fair view of the surrounding ground. Whilst we were thus waiting, a crashing in the bush, followed by a heavy fall and a cry of distress resembling the bleating of a sheep, told us that the quarry had been run into; so, descending from my position, I crept stealthily forward, and, my moccasins enabling me to tread with a perfectly noiseless step, guided by the sounds of the scuffle, I gained the spot. Looking over a low bush I saw a magnificent male puma, couched his full length on the ground, with his back and hind-

quarters turned towards me, and his teeth evidently buried in the throat of the deer, from which he was sucking the blood. He was perfectly unaware of my approach, and as he was not more than twenty paces from me, I had a famous chance, and, aiming at the back of his head, I pulled trigger; the cap, however, missed fire, and, startled by the click of the hammer, the puma raised his head, and fixed his glittering eyes full on me, evidently meaning mischief, for his tail lashed his sides, and every hair stood erect upon his body. No time was to be lost; taking a rapid aim between the eyes with the second barrel, I let drive; and simultaneous with the report was the angry roar of the monster and his spring, as he bounded and fell in his last agony close to where I was standing. Had the second barrel missed, or the wound not proved immediately mortal, I should in all probability have paid dearly for my sport, and got a severe mauling before Pierre could have come to my assistance. I had, however, luck on my side, and came off scatheless; but the game was intensely exciting whilst it lasted, and I was glad when it was over. I found, on a *post-mortem* examination, that my bullet had entered the right eye and passed out at the back of the head, splintering the skull considerably; no wonder, therefore, it proved an immediate settler. The puma much resembled the leopard in shape, but the skin was smoother, closer, and finer, and of an ash-grey colour. I had no means of measuring the body as it lay, but the skin was 7 feet 2 inches in length from the tip of the nose to the end of the tail, which appendage appeared long compared to that of a leopard. Its height at the shoulder must have been about 3 feet, or perhaps a trifle over. Although the puma is certainly not so strongly built as the Indian panther, which it much resembles in habits, it is considered by the Indians to be almost as dangerous a customer to tackle as the grizzly, as it greatly excels him in activity, and is very tenacious of life. I do not,



PUMAS.

however, believe that it will ever attack men unless previously wounded or hemmed-in in a corner; although Pierre told me that he had known instances of Indians having been attacked and killed at night, whilst sleeping, by these animals. Having carefully despoiled the carcase of the skin, the Blackfoot scout cut off some of the joints and tit-bits, as the flesh is considered delicate eating by the Indians, and, slinging the whole to a pole made out of a young sapling, we retraced our steps to camp, highly satisfied with our sport. The fishermen had laid in a fine stock of trout, besides killing a poacher in the shape of a large dog-otter with a good skin, which, after it had been prepared by the Indians, Slade converted into a most comfortable travelling cap.

During the night a party of five hungry wolves, attracted by the smell of meat, visited our camp; as the moon was well up when their presence was discovered, two of their number paid for their indiscretion with their lives, whilst most of the survivors received buck-shot wounds, as their trails were marked with blood. The next morning we started on our return to headquarters on the Gallatin, which we reached late on the following day. We found that a great hunt had taken place a couple of days after our departure, and that the camp was full of buffalo meat; this was rather a godsend, as our scouts informed us that a famous Blackfoot chief and his suite were about to pay us a friendly visit, and we were consequently about to have several extra mouths to fill.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DEER OF NORTH AMERICA.

THE principal deer found in North America are the moose, the cariboo, the wapiti, or Canadian stag, and the common or Virginian deer.

The moose, or North American elk, is the largest of the ruminant family; an adult bull averaging eighteen hands at the shoulder, whilst his head and antlers rise considerably above that height, and his weight, when in good condition, often exceeds 1200lbs. The muzzle of the moose is very broad and protruding, being covered with reddish-coloured hair, except just in front of the nostrils, which are so large that a man may thrust his arm into the cavity. The antlers of a bull moose often measure five feet from tip to tip, and weigh 60lbs.; they are palmated and fringed with short tines, the lowest being somewhat separated, and extending well over the forehead, supplying the place of brow antlers. They shed their horns by the end of January, and the new ones begin to sprout in April, attaining their full growth by September. In the middle of April the winter coat is shed, and for some time the animal presents a very rough appearance. The moose has a short thick neck, and both sexes have a kind of ruff or mane round the throat. The coat is composed of long stiff bristles of a dark brown colour, which in the bull changes to black in winter. Under the throat, pendant from the spot where the head joins the neck, the bulls have a fleshy appendage termed "the bell," from which grows a fringe of long black hair that at a short

distance looks like a beard. The bristles on the muzzle and jowl are of a reddish hue, and the hair covering the belly and inside the thighs is of a light sandy colour. The neck and shoulders are covered with very fine short wool, curiously interwoven with hair, and out of this the Indians manufacture beautiful winter gloves.

The moose lives chiefly on the leaves and young shoots of bushes and the smaller deciduous trees, such as the red and other maple, the white birch, mountain ash, poplar, and balsam. To get at foliage beyond the reach of his muzzle, he frequently charges a young tree, and bends it down till he has brought the leaves within his reach, pulling the young branches into his mouth by his mobile and prehensile upper lip, and biting them off. Unless the grass is very tall, or growing on a convenient bank, the moose will seldom attempt to crop it, his neck being too short to admit of his performing the operation of grazing with anything like comfort; he can graze only by straddling his legs and stooping awkwardly, which may be taken as certain evidence that green shoots and tender buds, and not grasses, are his proper food. He is, however, very fond of the broad-leaved grass growing in the dried bogs, and the roots of the yellow pond lily, upon which he feeds when he takes to the water during the summer to avoid the flies. When the plague of flies commences—which is equally annoying to the hunter and the moose—the animal strives to free himself by plunging into the water and allowing only his nostrils and mouth to remain above the surface. He is a famous swimmer, and has been known to hide himself from his pursuers on reaching a lake by diving, and remaining a long time below the water.

Much as we may be struck by the massive proportions of the moose, it must be averred that he is far from being a handsome animal, either when at rest or in motion; as his head is ugly beyond description, his form decidedly ungainly under every



MOOSE FIGHTING.

aspect, and his eyes lack the brilliancy and prominence of the rest of the deer family. The usual habitat of the moose being in the densest forests, the sense of sight is not so highly developed as in most other species of the deer tribe; but the enormous nasal cavity, great expansion of its chambers, and extent of surface covered by the olfactory membrane, together with the large ear-couches, attest his great powers of smelling and hearing. The moose is of cautious and retiring habits; in the autumn his usual haunts are in the forest adjoining the margin of lakes, or mossy swamps in which the cinnamon fern—his favourite food—grows luxuriantly. There he revels with his consort, and their wonderful faculties of scent and hearing are so keenly developed, that at this season of the year they are extremely difficult to approach unless by stratagem. One can hardly conceive an animal with such a spread of horns making his way at speed through the forest; but, throwing his antlers well back upon his massive withers, his strong limbs and stout neck enable him to overcome all obstructions, and he can make his way through an alder swamp at a much greater pace than the hunter can follow up in the path he has made.

Moose may be said to range from the mouth of the MacKenzie River to the shores of the Atlantic at the eastern extremity of Nova Scotia; in former years they were found as far south as the State of New York. For some time past they have been steadily decreasing, and, indeed, considering the wholesale destruction practised both by settlers and Indians, it is remarkable how any survive. I never could see any sport in the extermination of moose as practised in some parts of Canada during the winter months. At this season the cows with the young bulls and calves herd together, and, when the snow comes thickly down, form what is called a "moose yard;" that is, they select a sheltered part of the forest, generally upon a hillside, fruitful in brushwood of a deciduous nature, and



A MOOSE YARD.

diligently tread down the snow in a circle round it, so that an embankment encircles the yard and secures the inmates from the attacks of wolves and bears. Here they remain the whole winter, unless discovered by the hunter, who, if alone, will only make a note of the whereabouts of the yard, and mark it so that he may find it again, for there is no occasion for the least hurry. The longer the moose are allowed to live the fatter they become, and there is little or no chance of their escaping unless a sudden thaw should take place. At last the fatal day comes, and a party armed with fire-arms of all kinds surround the yard and commence an indiscriminate massacre, sparing neither cows nor calves. The old bulls rarely remain with the herd during the winter months, preferring to wander about the woods feeding and chewing the cud; but when the snow lies deep, they, too, are often wantonly destroyed in a wholesale manner both by the Indians and settlers, who are enabled to get over the snow in snow-shoes, as shown in the engraving, whilst the moose, with its fetlocks and hocks streaming with blood, flounders through the half-frozen snow, often sinking shoulder deep in its exertions to get away from the dogs. At last exhausted, it falls helpless, and whilst unable to extricate itself from the snow-drift, the hunters come up and blow its brains out, or more frequently knock it on the head with an axe.

Although this is considered to be fair sport in Canada, I look upon it as "poaching of a very low order." It is disgusting to see a fine bull slain in such an unseemly manner, when in a few weeks' time it would tax the best energies of a hunter experienced in woodcraft to approach within range of him.

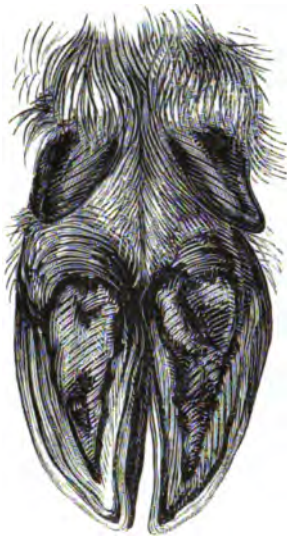
The legitimate time to hunt the moose is towards the end of summer and in autumn before the horns drop; but few of the settlers can spare time for hunting at this season of the year; besides, none except professional and experienced hunters



INDIAN CHASING MOOSE IN DEEP SNOW.

possess the woodcraft necessary to stalk and kill the animal fairly.

The engravings represent the hoofs of the moose and the reindeer. It seems strange that nature should have been so considerate towards the latter, and so neglectful to the former, inasmuch as the reindeer, with his light, hollow, and expansive hoofs with rounded points and sharp edges, can travel with ease



MOOSE HOOF.



REINDEER HOOF.

over frozen snow and hard surfaces; while the other, with his sharp pointed hoof, flounders about and sinks up to his haunches, perfectly helpless against man and beast.

The bull moose utters loud cries both by day and night during the rutting season, which is described by the Indians in their guttural voices as "Quoth, quoth," a sound somewhat resembling the long-drawn bellowing of a bull. The cow utters a strangely wild, prolonged call, which is closely imitated by the Indian hunter through a trumpet composed of rolled up birch

bark; during the rutting season, which lasts from the beginning of September to the end of October, the bull is easily attracted by this "calling" to within range of the hunter's rifle. The bull at this season forgets his natural caution and shyness, and as soon as he hears the call, which is audible at a long distance, he dashes through the forest in a bee line, to within a very short distance of the place whence the sound proceeded. There are amongst the Indians professional callers, who are very expert in luring both moose and other deer; during the autumn months I have killed many a fine head of game by their aid.

Our plan of proceedings was as follows. Setting out so as to arrive at the haunts of the moose before nightfall, we established our camp, and supped comfortably; after which, donning our leather hunting shirts so as to protect ourselves from the frosty night-air, we sallied into the forest as the moon rose, shedding her broad and silvery light upon the rocks and trees, upon the leaves of which the autumn tints had already appeared. Making our way along alder swamps or through pine clumps, now scrambling over logs and fallen trunks, or sinking knee-deep in the soft moss round the old hemlock spruces, which spread their gnarled branches and feathery foliage on every side, we arrived at the entrance of a gorge between the hills, where a gigantic pine-tree rose like a huge mast far above the surrounding underwood, which chiefly consisted of dwarfed maple. This was considered a favourable spot for commencing operations by my Indian companion; so whilst I looked to my rifle and selected my place of concealment, he climbed high up into the tree, so as to give the sound of his call the advantage of diffusing itself throughout the forest. His trumpet consisted of a roll of birch bark twisted into the shape of a speaking trumpet, about two feet long; and through this he emitted a prolonged, long drawn out note, which resounded far and wide

through the still night air. This cry he repeated with slight variations at intervals, but for the best part of an hour there was no response, and I had made up my mind either that there were no moose within hearing, or that they were too well engaged to pay attention to "the voice of my charmer;" when suddenly I heard the distant crashing of branches and the rattling of antlers against the trunks of the trees, and I knew the game was afoot. Shortly afterwards a deep hoarse bellow, more resembling a feline than a bovine roar, rose from a patch of alder-bushes, and to my surprise this was answered by two other animals far off, in different directions, on the hillside. My companion, now thrusting his arm up the trumpet, uttered a still lower and more plaintive cry, and immediately after a succession of deep grumblings and grunts, accompanied with the snapping of brushwood, betokened the near approach of our quarry. A moment more and a fine bull moose, with bristly main erect and huge palmated horns lowered for immediate action, stood before us sniffing in the air with his immense nostrils, and snorting and tearing up the ground with his hoofs. As the weird light of the moon shone upon him, he appeared to be of colossal size; and I felt the blood coursing quickly through my veins, and my heart thumping audibly against my ribs, as I noiselessly raised my rifle, and aiming at his fully exposed brawny chest fired a right and left shot almost simultaneously. The "thud" of the bullet was followed by a heavy fall and a slight struggle; then all was still, and I was about to rush from the cover and examine the spoils of the fallen when the bellowing of a second moose sounded, apparently close at hand.

I hastily reloaded, and remained on the *qui vive* whilst the Indian continued to emit the peculiar suppressed low moaning noises made by moose cows when browsing; but some minutes elapsed and there was no response, and I began to think that



MOOSE SHOOTING.

forewarned of danger by the smell of blood, he had stolen away, when a great animal rose directly in my rear; the first intimation I had of his presence being the snort of defiance that preceded his headlong rush. Luckily I was prepared, and let drive a snap shot at his head, which stopped his career, and brought him down upon his knees; and before he could recover his feet, a second shot through the chest stretched him lifeless at my feet. He had evidently made a long *détour*, and noiselessly and cautiously manœuvred, so as to get well to leeward of our position. Luckily there was scarcely a breath of wind stirring, and he was unable to detect our presence until he got right upon us, when he charged without hesitation. My companion wanted me to go to another likely place, and repeat the game just before day-break, which is said to be the best time for moose-calling, but I had had enough; so sending him to the nearest settlement to get people to bring in the venison, I made a big fire, and, rolling myself up in my buffalo robe, slept until morning, when I was awakened by a pack of cayotes, who had scented the game, but were scared from approaching it by my presence and the fire. Soon after day-break a party of settlers came up, and the venison was divided, I retaining one of the heads, as it had fine antlers with eighteen points, and weighed close upon 50 lbs.

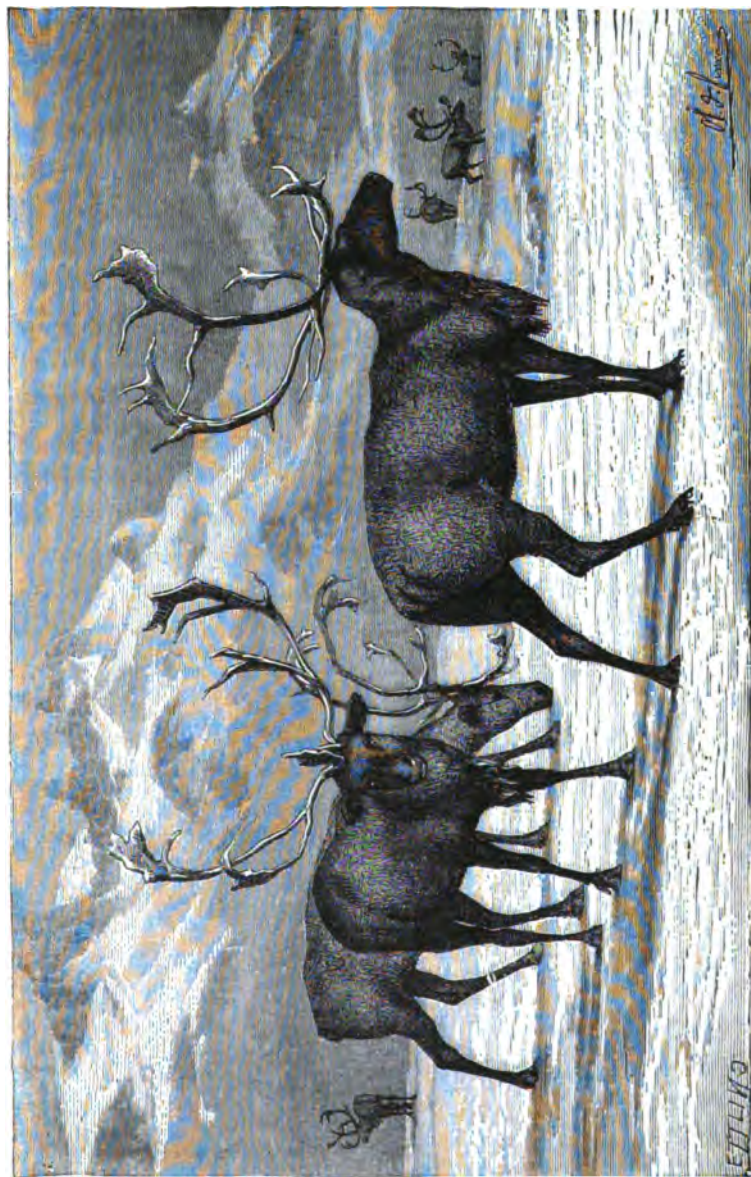
The cariboo, or reindeer of North America, is a strongly built, thick-set animal, carrying magnificent antlers. These vary both in shape and size very considerably in different specimens, there being, generally, certain marked peculiarities perceptible in all the bucks of one herd which distinguish them from those of another. Some have horns palmating towards the upper ends; others with branches springing from the palmated portions; but in most instances there is one developed brow antler, the other being a solitary curved prong. In this species the females also have horns, but they are small and weak compared to those of

the males, which are very massive, and often exceed 30 lbs. in weight.

The buck sheds his horns in the latter end of November, but the female retains hers during the winter months, and by this wise provision of nature she is enabled to protect her young from the male, and prevent him from destroying his own offspring, which he is very apt to do if he gets the chance. The cariboo is gregarious—males, females, and the young fawns herding together at all seasons. No sooner does the return of spring rouse the dormant reproductive energies of the system, than the budding antlers begin to show themselves, and the rapidity with which these “branching honours” are reproduced is something wonderful. The stags are in the greatest perfection in the month of September, when the velvet is worn off the horns, and their hide and carcass are in the best condition.

The cariboo is covered with dark brown brittle fur; the neck, throat, rump, and tail being white, whilst a band of the same colour encircles the legs from above the fetlock to the hoof. In the winter months, when the hair grows very long, the ends become almost white, so at this period the coat assumes a greyish-white appearance.

The cariboo is wonderfully provided by nature for existence in snow-covered districts, and for travelling over broken ice, for during the winter months the frog of the foot becomes almost absorbed, gradually wasting away until the edges of the hoof, now quite concave, grow out in sharp ridges, each division on the under surface presenting the appearance of a mussel shell; this singular conformation, which is represented in the engraving, gives the foot a lateral hold in maintaining a foothold on slippery surfaces. The frog does not fill up again until spring, when the antlers bud out. All around the fetlock long stiff bristles grow downward, which serve as a protection against



CARIBOO IN WINTER.

broken ice and frozen snow, which would otherwise cut the legs to pieces. The cariboo is thus enabled to traverse snow-covered plateaux, cross frozen lakes and rivers, or ascend icy precipices with wonderful ease; and can easily get away from either man or beast, when the moose, which is often found in the same district, falls an easy prey to his enemies. The cariboo is a migratory animal, the early spring and autumn being the two well-defined periods of migration. During the winter months they are also continually on the move; one day numerous herds may be found quietly feeding in the forest, while three days afterwards not a straggler will be found in the district. In severe winters they wander to the southernmost limits of their range; even crossing inhabited and cultivated districts; but in the summer months they retire to the mountain ranges and colder latitudes to avoid the flies. Cariboo are generally found in herds, or rather families, varying from ten to thirty in number; they may be met with across the whole width of the continent, being most numerous to the west of the Rocky Mountains in Northern British Columbia. Here numbers of them are killed every year for the manufacture of pemmican, which is a compound of the pounded dried flesh mixed with the fat and the marrow.

Although the cariboo appears to be identical with the reindeer of Northern Europe, he has never been domesticated and trained to draw sledges as in Lapland; but perhaps as the desolate districts he ranges over become more and more populated, he may yet be subjected to man's power, and become a useful beast of burden. The cariboo affords but tame sport to the true hunter, on account of his utter fearlessness and apparent stupidity. Lamont says:—"I have repeatedly known deer which I had failed in approaching unseen come up boldly of their own accord until they were within easy shot of me although I was not only in full view but to windward of them.

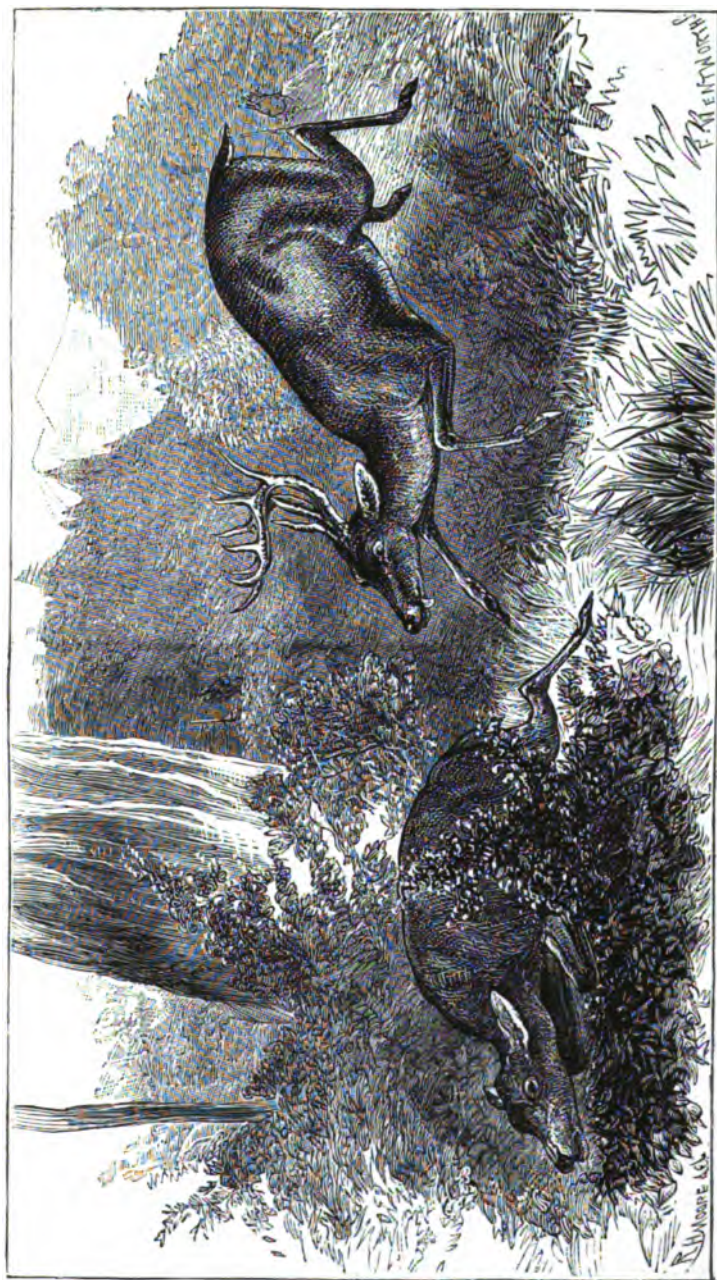


STALKING WAPITI DEER.

Neither does the report of a rifle much alarm them ; but that is more easily understood, as they are no doubt accustomed to hear the cracking of the glaciers, and the noises caused by the splitting of rocks by the frost in winter. On one occasion my companion found a troop of five deer, and, obtaining a concealed position whence they were within range of his rifle, knocked over four of them by a bullet from each of his four barrels ; the survivor then stood sniffing his dead companions until Kennedy had time to re-load and consummate this unparalleled sporting feat by polishing him off likewise." Again :—" In the first valley we came to we espied some small troops of deer feeding within half a mile of the shore. We landed, and I killed nine of them without much trouble ; I might easily have shot as many more ; but I got disgusted with such a burlesque upon sport and left them alone."

The wapiti, or, as it is sometimes called, the Canadian stag, is one of the largest and finest specimens of the deer species, as he grows to the height of the tallest ox, and is endowed with wonderful power and activity. The buck has long branched horns, separating in serpentine curves that often measure six feet from tip to tip ; as he dashes at speed through the forest, these lie close to his back, scarcely affording any obstruction as he makes his way through the trees. The general colour of the wapiti is dark ashen brown, but the head is of a yellowish tan colour, covered with long red and black hairs ; whilst round the throat and down the chest the coat is very thick and long.

Wapiti are sometimes found in herds considerably over a hundred strong ; it is a grand sight to see so large a number of these magnificent animals making their way through the forest under the leadership of some old buck, who exacts implicit obedience from the rest of the herd.



DRIVING VIRGINIAN DEER.

The wapiti are perhaps the fiercest of the deer tribe, and during the rutting season, when the bucks are always fighting for the favours of the hinds, the weakest are frequently killed by thrusts from the huge horns of their stronger rivals.

Many a hunter has been charged and badly hurt by an infuriated wounded wapiti, who will not hesitate to turn upon his human assailant, if he is brought to bay, and sees no other means of escape. When hard pressed, he will plunge into a swift-flowing river or lake and breast the current in the most gallant style; and there have been instances known of his having attacked his pursuers and capsized their birch-bark canoes.

The wapiti lives on the young shoots of certain trees, grass, herbs, and lichen; which latter food he obtains in the winter by digging great holes and scraping away the snow with his fore feet. His flesh is dry and coarse, but the hide is much prized by the Indians, as it makes the best and softest of hunting shirts, which do not turn hard after being wet, as is the case of the leather made from the skins of other deer.

The Virginian deer, or karjacow, is found in large herds all over the least populated portions of the United States; in size and general appearance it much resembles the fallow deer. The antlers are slender, and have numerous branches on the interior sides; but they are entirely destitute of brow antlers, as shown in the engravings.

In the neighbourhood of salt lagoons, karjacow congregate in vast numbers at certain seasons, being particularly partial to the crystallised saline particles adhering to the surrounding earth, left by the evaporation of the salt water. They are never found far from lakes or rivers, which they visit at least once during the twenty-four hours.

The Prong-horn—*Antilocapra Americana Cabree*, or goat

antelope—although termed an antelope in America, is more allied to the deer family, and in so many particulars is so unlike the true antelope genus, that naturalists will be either compelled to enlarge the character of that class, or to create another. The three essential points in which the Prong-horn differs from any other of the antelope species are :

First. Its horns are branched, which is not the case in any other of the antelope or gazelle species.

Secondly. It is destitute of suborbital sinus or lacrymal openings, with which all the antelope genus, without exception, are furnished. This is one of the chief characteristics distinguishing the genus antelope from the deer tribe.

Thirdly. It is entirely deficient in the posterior or accessory hoofs, there being only two on each foot.

The engraving not only gives an accurate representation of this beautiful animal, but also depicts the extraordinary horns which distinguish it from all other varieties of its class.



HORNS OF A VIRGINIAN DEER.

The horns of a full grown buck are about 18 inches in length, curving upwards and backwards, and having a triangular prong inclining inwards. The shafts of the horns are pearled and striated, and immediately above the prong they diminish to less than half the thickness they are below. The prong is smooth

and unwrinkled, about six inches in length, and blunt at the extremity; the width between the roots of the horns is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The ends of the horns are sharp-pointed, and a very old buck has often two or three little irregular points growing out on each side. The doe has small straight pointed horns, about three inches in length and without the prong. The buck Prong-horn has an elegant and stately form, is about 50 inches in length from the point of the nose to the root of the tail, and about 38 inches in height at the shoulder. The female is somewhat smaller, and the neck is shorter. The general colour of both sexes is a reddish dun, the throat, belly, and disc on the buttocks being a greyish white. Encircling the throat, and on each side of the neck is a white band, with a dark brown one just below it. The does are faintly marked in comparison with the bucks, which have in addition a ridge of coarse hair resembling a short mane running along the crest of the neck during the winter months. In summer there only remains of this a black stripe on the upper surface of the neck.

The rutting season of this species commences in September; the bucks run for about six weeks, and during this period fight with great courage, and even with a degree of ferocity. When a male sees another approaching, or accidentally comes upon one of his rivals, both parties run at each other with their heads lowered and their eyes flashing angrily; and while they strike with their horns they wheel and bound with prodigious activity and rapidity, giving and receiving severe wounds. Sometimes, like fencers, getting within each other's "points," each hooks his antagonist with the recurved branches of his horn, which bend considerably inwards and downwards. One of these combats is shown in the engraving.

The Prong-horned antelope brings forth its young about the same time as the common deer—from early in May to the

middle of June: it has generally two fawns at a birth. The young are not spotted like the fawn of the common deer, but are of a uniform dun colour. The dam remains by her young for some days after they are born, feeding immediately around the spot, and afterwards gradually enlarging her range. When the young are a fortnight old they have gained strength and speed enough to escape, with their fleet-footed mother, from wolves or other four-footed foes. Sometimes, however, the wolves discover and attack the young when they are too feeble to escape, and the mother then displays the most devoted courage in their defence. She rushes on them, butting and striking with her short horns, and sometimes tosses a wolf heels over head; she also uses her fore-feet, with which she deals severe blows, and, if the wolves are not in strong force, or desperate with hunger, puts them to flight, and then seeks with her young a safer pasturage or some almost inaccessible rocky hill-side.

On approaching the "rolling prairies," or "foot-hills," where the Rocky Mountains first break the level of the plain, the hunter will most likely come across the Prong-horn, as the lower spurs of this range are their favourite resort.

The Prong-horn usually frequents the low prairies adjoining the covered woody bottoms, during spring and autumn; but is also found on the high and upland prairies, amid broken hills, or along the margins of rivers and streams. They swim very well, and occasionally a herd when startled, takes to the water, and may be seen crossing a river in straggling files, but without disorder, and apparently with ease. Their walk is a slow and somewhat pompous gait, their trot elegant and graceful, and their run light and inconceivably swift; they pass up or down hill, or along the level plain with the same apparent ease, and males and females are found together at all seasons of the year. In some instances they are

found in pairs, whilst in others several hundreds may be seen congregated in a herd. They are always shy and timid, and their large and beautiful eyes enable them to scan the surface of the undulating prairie, and detect the lurking Indian or wolf, creep he ever so cautiously; and should some intervening elevation or copse-wood conceal his approach, the chances are that his presence would be detected by their keen sense of smell, if he did not approach well to leeward. In stalking these animals great caution and patience is necessary, as the hunter must move very slowly, and only at intervals, when the animals are feeding with their heads to the ground, or averted from him. They appear to live on the short grass of the prairies, mosses, buds and young shoots of certain shrubs; in hard winters, when the snow lies deep on the ground, and they cannot obtain their usual food, they suffer greatly from hunger, and often perish in great numbers. When the snow is deep and soft, they are often caught by the Indians in snow-shoes.

They are quick to scent danger, and the first one which notices the approach of man, gives its peculiar call of warning, when the whole herd quickly runs in a body. An old buck antelope, generally the largest, will step out a few paces from the rest to make observations. He looks but for a moment, stamps the ground impatiently, and then bounds away with the speed of the wind, followed by the entire flock, until they are entirely out of sight. The hunter who hopes to have a shot at them with his rifle, generally finds himself mistaken. As they dash away, they can only be seen at intervals, crossing the knolls on the prairie. In a few moments nothing is discernible but a line of white objects, which, viewed through a field-glass, prove to be white patches on their backs.

The white man conducts his hunting excursions in various modes suited to his tastes, and adapted to the nature of the country in which he resides. In mountainous rocky regions,



THE PONG-HORN ANTELOPE.

where horses cannot be used with advantage, he goes on foot, armed with a rifle, takes no dog, and seeks for his game in such situations as his sagacity and experience suggest. He either spies it in its bed, or silently steals upon it behind the covert of the stem of a large tree, whilst it is feeding, and takes a steady and fatal aim. On the contrary, in situations adapted to riding, where the woods are thickly clothed with underbush, where here and there wide openings exist between briar patches and clumps of myrtle bushes, or on the open prairie, antelopes are chased with hounds, the hunters being all mounted.

Large, well-trained dogs, when run in pairs by relays, will often overtake and pull down antelopes under favourable circumstances. Those who possess well-trained dogs, capable of outrunning the antelope, prize them highly, not only for the sport they give, but from the fact that they can catch wounded animals of all kinds, which would otherwise escape. Audubon, the great American naturalist, gives the following graphic description of the habits of the Prong-horn :—

“Reader, let us carry you with us to the boundless plains over which the Prong-horn speeds. Hurrah for the prairies and the swift antelopes as they fleet by the hunter like flashes or meteors seen but for an instant, for quickly do they pass out of sight in the undulating ground, covered with tall rank grass. Observe now a flock of these beautiful animals: they are not afraid of man—they pause in their rapid course to gaze on the hunter, and stand with head erect, their ears as well as eyes directed towards him, and make a loud noise by stamping with their fore feet on the hard earth; but suddenly they become aware that he is no friend of theirs, and away they bound like a flock of frightened sheep—but far more swiftly do the graceful antelopes gallop off, even the kids running with extraordinary speed by the side of their parents—and now they turn

around a steep hill and disappear, then perhaps again come in view, and once more stand and gaze at the intruder. Sometimes, eager with curiosity, and anxious to examine the novel object which astonishes as well as alarms them, the antelopes on seeing a hunter, advance toward him, stopping at intervals, and then again advancing; and should the hunter partly conceal himself, and wave his handkerchief, or a white or red rag on the end of his ramrod, he may draw the wondering animals quite close to him, and then quickly seizing his rifle send a ball through the fattest of the group ere the timid creatures have time to fly from the fatal spot."

Westward ho! Far away to the West of the great Mississippi, on the rolling prairies that encompass the Rocky Mountains, you must travel, gentle reader, if you would stalk the Prong-horn, or American antelope. There, undisturbed by anything but the songs of the birds, and the hum of insects, vast herds of these beautiful animals may be seen careering over the undulating plains, from which this vast range of wild and desolate heights (alternating with deep valleys, and overhanging gorges) rise abruptly; often appearing to be quite near—owing to the illusion caused by the wonderful clearness of the air—when it would require a long day's journey to reach them. The atmosphere on the Western prairies is so pure, that antelopes are easily seen when fully a mile off, and the hunter can tell whether they are feeding quietly or are alarmed; but, beautifully as the transparent thin air shows all distant objects, we have never found the great Western prairies equal the flowery descriptions of travellers. They lack the pure streamlet, wherein the hunter may assuage his thirst—the delicious copses of dark leafy trees! and even the thousands of fragrant flowers, which they are poetically described as possessing, are generally of the smaller varieties; while the Indian who roams over them is far from the ideal being—all grace, strength, and

nobleness in his savage freedom—that we, from these descriptions, conceive him.

The hunters of the prairies of the far West, are ardent and indefatigable in the pursuit of game, and the life they lead is full of pleasurable excitement. Up long before dawn, while stillness yet reigns upon the earth; on foot at dewy eve, and late in the night, reckless of danger, careless of exposure, they are ever on the watch, observing the habits of the denizens of the woods and mountains. Those only who have lived in these wild regions,

“Lone as the rivers of unpeopled lands,”

know the extreme pleasure of being afoot in the forest at early morning, while there is a haze over the landscape, listening to the gradual awaking of animal life around, and hearing how the very earth shakes off its deep slumber. At last, as day begins to break, the hunter sees strange weird-like forms emerge from the gloom, stealing silently with ghost-like tread; and he then has admirable opportunities for observing the habits and instincts of free, nature-impelled, forest creatures. The bark or call-note of the prairie wolf, announces the near approach of daylight, and the hunter, at once afoot, does not require much time for the duties of his toilet; he makes a fire, boils his coffee, and broils a bit of venison or wild turkey. Then he treads the paths along which the sign shows that animals pass in returning from their nightly rambles to the covert usually their resting-place for the day; or, perhaps, he ascends an elevation from whence he may discover his quarry feeding in the lower grounds.

We have wandered amongst the Rocky Mountains for months together; and have passed many days of excitement, some, perchance, of danger, on the prairies in the wilder portions of the Western States, whilst in pursuit of the grizzly bear, the buffalo, the large horned sheep, the Rocky Mountain

goat, and the Prong-horn antelope ; at times memory, indeed, recalls adventures still more hazardous, for the Indian tribes were then out on the war-path, and it was only because our party were known to be well armed, and always upon the alert, that we were not attacked.

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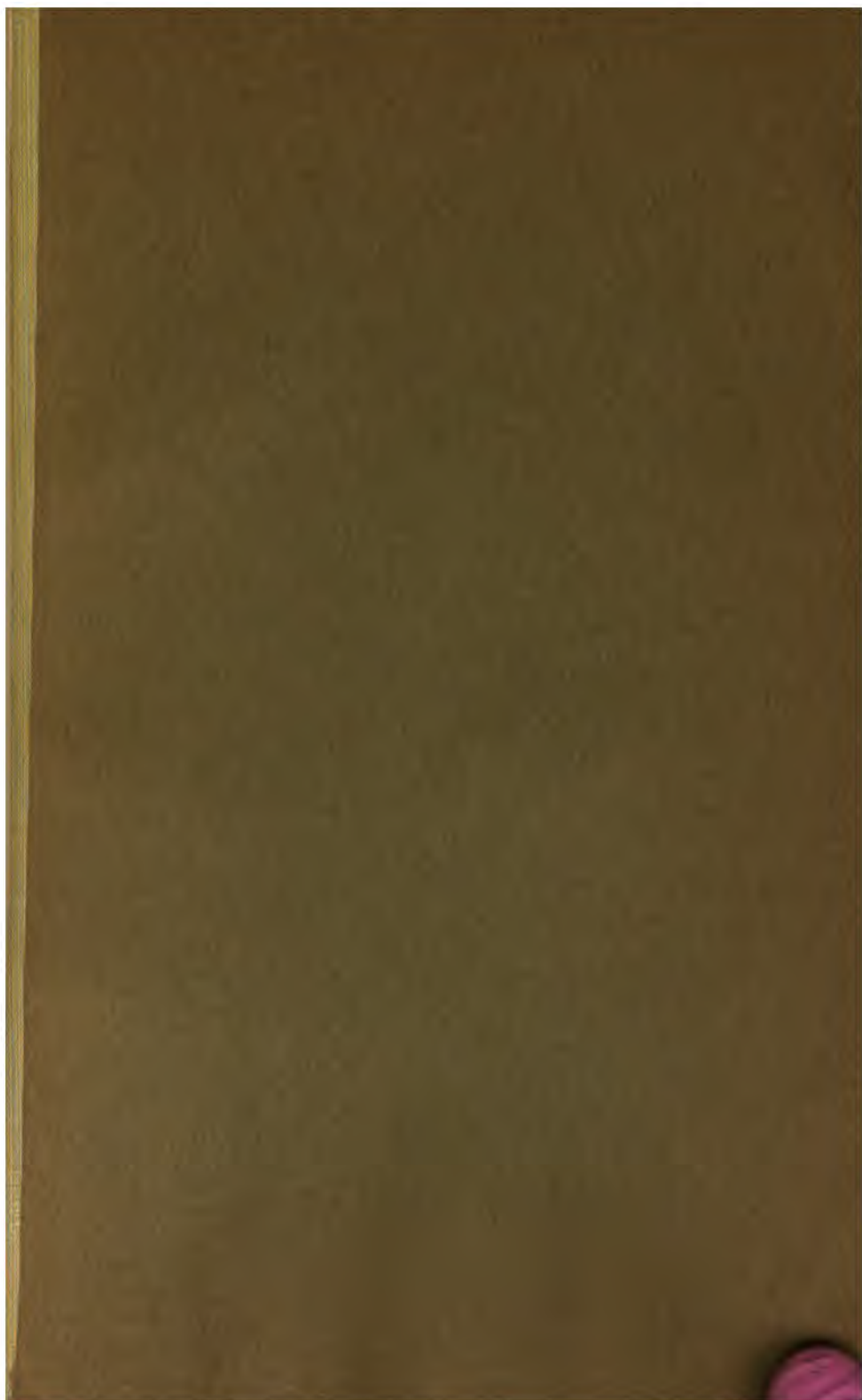
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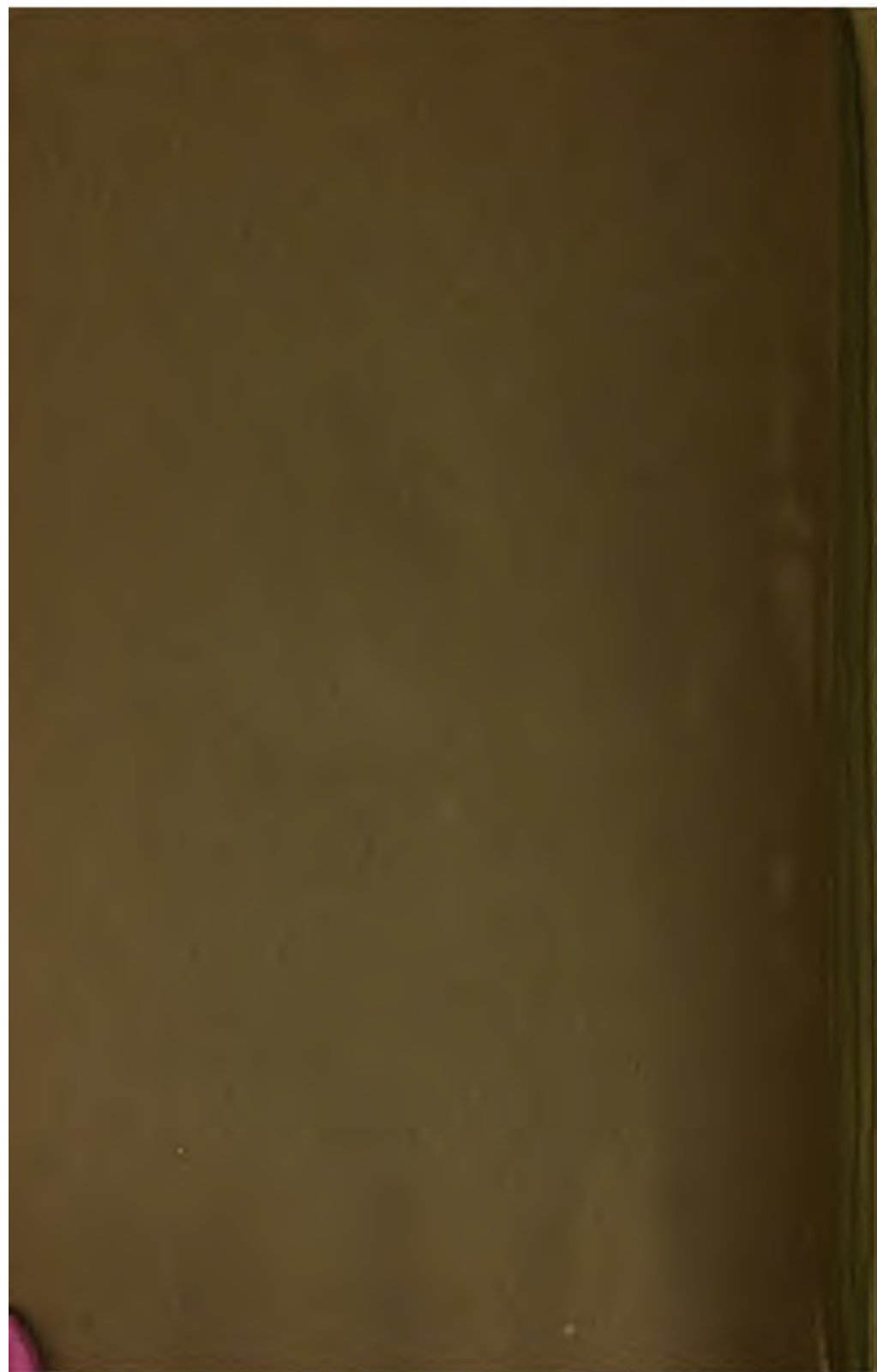
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